



SECTION 3

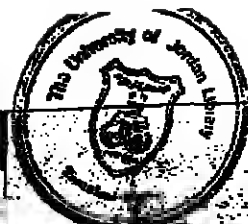
REVIEW

Preparing for war - and tracking down Santa Claus



SECTION 4

SPORT & LEISURE Inside Anfield - and how to keep up your castle



THE TIMES

30p

SATURDAY DECEMBER 17 1988

'That's politics' says controversial Health Minister

Currie resigns as 10 more take out writs

Government injects cash to stem eggs crisis

By Martin Fletcher, Political Reporter

Mrs Edwina Currie yesterday resigned as junior Health Minister two weeks after a single unguarded remark plunged the British egg industry into its worst crisis.

Her short, flamboyant and intensely controversial ministerial career came to an end as Mr John MacGregor, Minister of Agriculture, announced a multi-million pound scheme to buy-in millions of eggs.

The resignation came on the first day of an emergency £500,000 Government advertising scheme to counter the fears she had aroused, and on a day when 10 more writs were issued against her by irate egg producers seeking damages.

The egg industry greeted the news with delight. Last night Mrs Currie's replacement was named as Mr Roger Freeman, who has been Under Secretary at the Ministry of Defence since May 1986.

An accountant by training and a former banker, Mr Freeman has been MP for Kettering since June 1983, having entered the Commons at the same time as Mrs Currie. The frequently outspoken Mrs Currie, a minister for just two years, made her ultimate gaffe during a television interview two weeks ago today when she said that "most" British egg production was infected with salmonella.

Over the past fortnight the political pressure for her to resign had steadily mounted to fever pitch as she failed to apologise or retract and as egg sales slumped by up to 60 per cent. Tory MPs were deluged with complaints from furious egg producers who face financial ruin and the prospect of having to slaughter their chicken stocks.

Mrs Currie's position appears to have become untenable on Thursday night when Thames Valley Eggs, one of the country's biggest producers, started legal action against her for damages. The first public sign of her impending resignation came early yesterday morning when Mr David Mellor, Minister of State for Health, appeared in her place for a Commons debate on abortion.

She had in fact already seen Mr Kenneth Clarke, the Secretary of State for Health, at the Department at 8.45am. Having decided to resign she then had an hour-long meeting with Mr David Waddington, the Chief Whip, at Number 12 Downing Street.

Then she walked along the private corridor to Number 10. She spent 30 minutes with Mrs Thatcher, from 12.50pm. Earlier, at 10.30am, she had telephoned Mr David Canzini, the agent in her South Derbyshire constituency, and broken the news.

Mr Canzini said she had opened the conversation by asking about unrelated constituency matters. "Once she had told me what had occurred she added 'That's politics, isn't it', and I could almost imagine the smile on her face. There was no trace of emotion or bitterness in her voice. She obviously fully accepted that faced with an impossible situation she felt her only honourable course of action would be resignation."

Government sources stressed that Mrs Currie had asked for the meeting and that there was no question of the Prime Minister having sacked her. In her formal letter to Mrs Thatcher, Mrs Currie expressed no regret for the crisis she appears to have provoked. She said merely that she had considered "the matter" very carefully and had decided to offer her resignation. "I think that in all the circumstances this is the best course."

Mrs Thatcher, in reply, said she had received Mrs Currie's letter "with great personal sadness". She continued: "It has, I know, been a very difficult time and I fully understand your reasons for resigning."

Mrs Currie's "great energy and enthusiasm" would be missed, said Mrs Thatcher, and she praised her "tremendous contribution, among other things, in making all of us realise that better health is not just the responsibility of doctors and nurses but that so much depends on the way we look after ourselves and our families".

Mr Clarke likewise issued a statement regretting Mrs Currie's departure and praising her contribution to the department's work. "She is entitled to feel proud of her achievements in the fields of women's health and health promotion in particular."

In the early days of the row, Mr Clarke had staunchly defended Mrs Currie and suggested in the Commons that her detractors envied her ability to generate publicity. Mrs Currie's resignation Continued on page 16, col 7



The departing Mrs Currie: she was 'definitely not' given the sack

Crackdown on work shirkers to save £140m

By Jill Sherman and Tim Jones

The Government yesterday announced a crackdown on the workshy in a package of measures designed to save £140 million and remove 50,000 people from the unemployment register.

Under the new Social Security Bill, people out of work risk losing unemployment benefit unless they can prove they are actively looking for work. The unemployed will also be unable to refuse a job purely on the grounds of the rates of pay offered, after a maximum of 13 weeks.

The proposals came under immediate attack from the Labour Party and the TUC who said the "rag bag of a Bill" provided a licence to harass the unemployed and an open invitation for employers to pay below the rate for the job.

The TUC criticized "the hypocrisy of the Government which is hell bent on dole fraud while at the same time putting thousands of people out of work in shipyards and sacking people at GCHQ".

Under the new Bill staff in unemployment benefit offices will be given increased powers to demand proof from claimants that they have tried to find work, such as job application letters or records of telephone calls. This replaces the present requirement that claimants only have to be "available" for work.

Launching the Bill, Mr John Moore, Secretary of State for Social Security, said that it would help open up the labour market and encourage people to take up the growing

number of jobs on offer. Mr Moore said that he would expect all those claiming unemployment benefit to actively seek work on a weekly basis, although in practice most claimants will be checked every two weeks when they visit their local benefit office.

Mr Nicholas Scott, Minister for Social Security, said that some unemployed people had been allowed to drift into an attitude where they felt they did not need to be looking for work. "We are getting a very much better employment situation. It is right for individuals to be in employment rather than on state benefit," he said.

Mr Moore said the measures to cut dole queues would alone save £100 million but the Government expects to save a further £40 million from another clause which will make companies reimburse the state for benefit paid for industrial accidents and injuries. About 50,000 would be expected to come off unemployment registers, he said.

The CBI said last night that the measure to force employers to repay state benefits for people suffering from accident, injury and disease would increase liability premiums by 16 per cent.

Mr Robin Cook, the Shadow Social Services Secretary, said the Government had lost a golden opportunity to do something for those in need, such as the disabled.

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Inflation level

Britain's inflation rate steadied at 6.4 per cent last month, after rising strongly since the summer. But the good news was only temporary, and inflation seems certain to top 7 per cent in January, and could reach 8 per cent in the spring. Page 19

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Knife gang in wave of motorway stabbings

By Mark Souster and Stewart Tisdler

A gang of burglars who left a trail of blood through suburban Surrey gratuitously stabbing and murdering victims were last night being hunted by police across southern England.

One man was left to die in a field bound and stripped after arguing with the gang when it commandeered his car.

A second victim was fighting for his life in hospital after

being knifed in his home as he too confronted the gang and tried to defend his elderly parents.

Detectives believe the gang, totalling three or four, has carried out up to a dozen attacks, including rape, in the past two months striking from the M25 into suburban London and the Surrey commuter belt.

After one burglary earlier this month police gave chase in south London in the early hours of the morning but lost

the gang. According to Scotland Yard the suspects are all in their 20s and about medium build. One is white and one is black but there is no clear description of a third member. Police think there could also be a fourth member of the gang.

As Surrey and Scotland Yard launched a joint investigation last night Det Chief Supt Vincent McFadden, head of Surrey CID and the joint operation, said: "There is every possibil-

ity these men will strike again. They showed violence in the extreme. It was gratuitous violence. I do not see how anyone could justify what these men did."

He warned the public not to approach the men as they were "extremely dangerous".

Speaking at the Reigate headquarters of the investigation, he said there was no suggestion the gang would return but he advised households everywhere to keep windows and doors locked.

The crimes committed on Thursday night span a 20-mile radius straddling the M25.

The attacks began when a building company manager and a teenage employee were ambushed as they left the White Bear public house in Fickleshole near New Addington, Surrey.

Their Austin Princess car was flagged down at about 11.30pm and they were forced to drive up the road to a green Spitfire which had been left Continued on page 16, col 1

Bush picks Tower to run US defence

From Christopher Thomas, Washington

President-elect George Bush yesterday nominated Mr John Tower, a personal friend, as Defence Secretary, ending weeks of speculation while the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted extensive background checks into the former Texas senator.

There has been widespread concern on Capitol Hill that Mr Tower would resist substantial economies in the Pentagon because of his close relationship with defence contractors but he said yesterday that he would go along with curbs in defence spending.

"We have a great challenge ahead," he said. "We must provide at least as much defence for less money. We must rationalise our force structure. We must revise and reform our management and procurement procedures."

He extended an olive branch to the Democrat-controlled Congress, which is clearly in a mood for substantial reductions. American public opinion is on their side, primarily because of the new, warmer relationship with the Soviet Union.

"We must have bi-annual budgeting," Mr Tower insisted. "This will require close cooperation with Congress."

Mr Bush is also set to nominate Representative Jack Kemp as Secretary for Housing and Urban Development, a key post touching on the national crisis of homelessness. Mr Kemp, a right-winger who fought Mr Bush for the presidential nomination, claims to be heir of the Reagan legacy. He retires from Congress next month after representing a working class district in the Buffalo area of New York for 18 years.

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"We have a great challenge ahead," he said. "We must provide at least as much defence for less money. We must rationalise our force structure. We must revise and reform our management and procurement procedures."

He extended an olive

BR blames signal work

By Tim Jones and Rodney Cowton

British Rail formally acknowledged last night that defective installation of signalling equipment was believed to be responsible for the rail crash at Clapham on Monday.

Its conclusion came after three days of hearings by an internal inquiry into the disaster.

The crash claimed its 34th victim earlier in the day with the death of Mr Stephen Dyer, aged 35, of Downlands Close,

Southampton at St George's Hospital, Tooting, south-west London.

At the inquiry, railway technicians gave evidence of the pressures under which they had to work when carrying out signalling installations.

According to one railway union source, telecommunications personnel at Clapham had been working as much as 60 hours a week.

Defective signal, page 3

Merger opens battle of bookmakers

By David Brewerton and Graham Rock

A battle for domination among Britain's bookmakers broke out last night when the William Hill betting shop chain was taken over by Mecca Bookmakers in a £331 million cash deal.

The combination of William Hill and Mecca, part of the Grand Metropolitan conglomerate, brings together the second and fourth largest groups respectively to create a chain with 1701 branches in the UK, only about 50 branches behind the market leader, Ladbroke.

The deal is being examined by the Office of Fair Trading, which may ask the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to mount a full investigation.

In particular, the Office of Fair Trading will be probing the situation in Greater London where the new chain will own about 800 of the 2,000 betting offices. The new group will boast annual

turnover of some £1.25 billion and profits of £50 million. Mecca expects profits to increase as the benefits of putting the two groups together emerge. The big four bookmakers, Ladbroke, Hill, Coral and Mecca, now the big three, own more than 40 per cent of the country's 10,300 betting shops, with

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the remaining 60 per cent in the hands of independent owners and small chains.

But the more powerful chains have a disproportionate share of the market, taking over half the off-course bets which are placed.

The deal will consolidate William Hill as the leading bookmaker in credit betting by telephone, for which it has developed highly sophisticated electronic systems.

Until yesterday's deal William Hill

was owned by Sears, the stores chain which takes in Selfridges, the Decks and Savone Shoe chain and Freemans, the mail order house. A working title of "Hills" has been chosen for the new company, which will be run by Boh Green, the head of Mecca Bookmakers, and who was instrumental in the introduction of satellite racing into betting shops.

"It is a momentous occasion for both companies and the industry generally," Mr Green said, "and I think racing will benefit from the deal. We will be a very efficient organization, generating increased turnover in retail betting."

"The two companies have a perfect strategic fit. We bring a very strong management team and leadership of the industry in technology and communications. Hills have a very clear name - ours had become confused, with Miss World and Mecca Leisure." William Continued on page 16, col 7

« When you seek to make a COGNAC that is TRULY PRECIOUS » says BERNARD HINE ~ « one word will often come in useful ~ NON! »

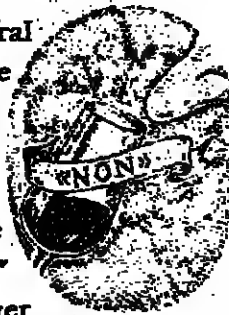
Rather like the great French General himself, Jacques and Bernard Hine know how to say 'Non.'

'Non' to anything but the finest grapes in Cognac. 'Non' to the clear, young cognacs, unless they are absolutely as they want them. 'Non' indeed, to mature cognacs however

exquisite, that do not blend like notes, to create the perfect symphony.

These proud principles, handed down by 6 generations of Hines, produce only the finest cognacs. But of course such standards also make it impossible to produce Hine in large quantities. Hine is rarified and Hine is rare. Known by many, tasted by few.

It should be sought out and then only in truly elevated circumstances brought out, and served with a flourish.





NEWS ROUNDUP

# Dublin request on prosecution

The Irish government has asked the Royal Ulster Constabulary to prosecute in the Northern Ireland courts a self-confessed IRA terrorist for a murder committed in the Republic. RUC sources said last night that the request would almost certainly be granted. It comes after the confession of Sean O'Callaghan to the murder of a police informer in Cork three years ago. Earlier this month, O'Callaghan, a former Sinn Fein councillor in Tralee, Co Kerry, walked into Tunbridge Wells police station in Kent and announced that he wanted to confess to various IRA crimes.

The IRA yesterday warned the British Army that it had a week to remove the families of soldiers living in Northern Ireland or suffer the consequence.

Meanwhile, an off-duty part-time Ulster Defence Regiment soldier was shot dead while he was sitting in his coal lorry in Downpatrick, Co Down.

# Tax gathering grant

Mr John Gummer, Minister for Housing and Planning, said yesterday that local authorities had no excuse for delaying schemes to collect the poll tax, when he announced the allocation of £135 million to buy computers and office equipment. The money has been shared according to local population and what Mr Gummer called the relative mobility of inhabitants - people are thought to be more expensive to track in inner cities.

# Why Meteor crashed

The last airworthy Meteor jet crashed at Coventry air show last May because its pilot used the air brakes at too low a speed, according to a Ministry of Defence report. Flight Lieutenant Peter Stacey, aged 38, an instructor at RAF Scaampton Central Flying School, died in the crash. The Meteor was notorious for diving if its speed dropped below 170 knots with air brakes extended and pilots were warned to retract them before the undercarriage was lowered.

# Guinness case delay

Seven businessmen accused of making more than £24 million during the Guinness takeover had their trial postponed for two months yesterday in order to make applications to drop the charges against them. Lawyers for the seven, including Ernest Saunders, the £175,000-a-year former chief executive of Guinness, made the application to the Central Criminal Court sitting at Southwark, south London. Mr Saunders, Gerald Ronson, Anthony Parnes, Sir Jack Lyons, Roger Seelig, Lord Patrick Spens and David Mayhew, face 53 charges including theft, falsification and conspiracy.

# 'Flu strikes South-east

The current influenza outbreak is more severe in South-east England than in the North or Scotland. However, people living in London are less likely to catch the virus than those in Wales or the South-west, a survey of doctors disclosed yesterday. Beccam Health Care has questioned more than 150 doctors in Britain about the levels of influenza in their area each week since 1971.

# Chess climax tonight

The last leg of the final round of the First World Active Chess Championship takes place this evening in Mazatlan, Mexico. Former world chess champion Anatoly Karpov of the Soviet Union beat his compatriot Jaan Ehivest by 2.5 points to 0.5 on Thursday to reach the final. He now faces Victor Gavrikov. Gavrikov beat Vladimir Tukmakov, also of the Soviet Union, 2.5 points to 1.5 in the other semi-final. Four matches of the final were played last night. The winner will be the first player to reach 4.5 points over the two days.

# Currie falls victim to her style

By Robin Oakley  
Political Editor

The resignation of Mrs Edwina Currie amid a flurry of egg producers' writs removes from the Government ranks the most newsworthy member of Mrs Margaret Thatcher's team.

As a senior minister put it this week: "Name one other member of this Government beside the Prime Minister who can be identified in pubs up and down the land merely by a Christian name".

Mrs Thatcher has a genuine soft spot for the headline-hogging Derbyshire MP who reaches the parts of the popular press that other ministers rarely penetrate.

The Prime Minister hates to let a minister go when that minister is under fire from the Opposition. Ministerial mistakes are usually punished discreetly at a later reshuffle. Nor will the Prime Minister be

pleased at allowing victory to the envious and to the anti-semitic elements in her party who were among those who climbed on the anti-Edwina bandwagon.

One senior minister told *The Times* earlier in the week: "We thought that by just keeping her down in the dungeons for a few days with the handcuffs on we could see it through and keep her".

The political crescendo, which has set off furious tussles between the agriculture and health ministries, proved impossible to surmount without the sacrifice of a victim.

Mrs Currie has always lived dangerously. She created, maintained and flaunted a high profile which helped her to rise to prominence faster than most of her contemporaries. But the penalty of living in the spotlight is that the blemishes show as well as the dimples. She has appeared at times to be inebriated by the exuberance of her

own media personality and has now failed one political breath test too many.

Her Birmingham-cum-Liverpool-classless accent, the bright make-up and eye-catching clothes have made her a target for a whole breed. If it is still a mistake in the Conservative Party to brandish your ambition it is all the more so for a woman.

The tragedy of her rise and fall is that behind the gimmickry and headline-chasing Mrs Currie has been one of the hardest-working ministers in the Government. She owed her promotion not to having what has now been dubbed one of the most expensive mouths in political history but to the fact that the Tory whips could rely on her to be available and to turn in a workmanlike speech when they needed one. She can serve it up with or without gimmicks.

She won her Derbyshire South seat for the first time in 1983 after

attracting the notice of some of the 40 constituencies to which she applied after brandishing a pair of handcuffs in the law and order debate at the Conservative Party conference in 1981. She bludgeoned her way on to radio and television shows, developed a relationship with the popular press and, in the words of one party admiral "irritated the hell out of her fellow MPs".

On the eggs question, what remains a puzzle is that Mrs Currie was not prepared to take some of the steam out of the affair in the early stages by confessing that she had gone too far with one throw-away phrase and that she was sorry if it had been misunderstood. In the end, it seems, she is a victim of the adversarial style of British politics in which it is considered an impossible thing for a minister ever to admit an error without instantly being turned into a pillar of salt.

# Constituency is split on support for 'our Edwina'

By Ian Smith

Reaction to the controversy enveloping Mrs Currie varied sharply in her Derbyshire constituency yesterday between loyal supporters closing ranks behind "our Edwina" and egg farmers who blame her for destroying their livelihoods.

Before news of her resignation came through, the telephones at the constituency party headquarters in Swadlincote village, near Burton upon Trent, rang continuously with calls of encouragement.

The reaction had been a mixture of surprise at the controversy her comments had caused and anger at the "treacherous back-stabbing" by backbenchers.

Mr David Canzini, constituency agent, said Mrs Currie had been hurt by the reaction of her House of Commons peers to her comments on the dangers of contracting salmonella poisoning from eggs. "She thinks that what she said is right. She knew her remarks would cause a lot of debate and that is what she works for anyway."

"I think the vehemence of some of her colleagues has

surprised and hurt her. She finds it difficult to come to terms with the disloyalty which has been shown."

This view was not shared by Mr Fred Critchlow, an egg farmer in Foston, eight miles from where Mrs Currie lives at weekends in a converted windmill with her husband Ron, an accountant, and their two children.

A week ago Mr Critchlow berated her over her remarks and predicted thousands of hens would have to be slaughtered. He said he was aghast at her reply. "She asked, 'Aren't you insured? You farmers should conduct your business like any other'. I could not believe it. I told her no insurance company would provide cover for a situation like this brought about by rash statements by a government minister", Mr Critchlow said yesterday.

"I told her she would stand accused of causing hundreds of thousands of birds to be gassed and buried, and that at the end of the week her head would roll. She just did not understand the severity of the affects of her statement."

# Egg producers go to court



Top: Mr John Cole, managing director of Thames Valley Eggs, which on Thursday became the first company to serve a writ on Mrs Edwina Currie for her remarks about salmonella poisoning. Its solicitor, Mr Adrian Budgen, said "substantial" damages would be sought. Below: the writ from West Country Eggs, one of 10 issued yesterday.

The best  
colours

Mrs Currie... resignation... Thatcher... "When I asked to... morning... I told you... considered the matter... I had concluded... should offer my resignation... Government... I think... all the circumstances... best course."

"It has been both a privilege and a pleasure to be a Minister in the Department of Health under your leadership. You have made the most of the opportunities to improve the economy have made possible record funding for the National Health Service, producing standards of health care for all our people, especially women, survived in the world. British politics in which it is considered an impossible thing for a minister ever to admit an error without instantly being turned into a pillar of salt."

"You first appointed me as Parliamentary Private Secretary to Sir Keith (now Lord) Joseph at the Department of Education and Science. Since then, I have served as a Minister under three Secretaries of State - Norman Fowler, John Moore and Kenneth Clarke - and would like to put on record my admiration for all of them, and appreciation of their help and guidance."

"Finally, my thanks to you personally, for your encouragement, for your wisdom and courage, and for all you are doing for our country. I remain a firm and committed supporter of the Conservative Party and this Government and look forward to further successes in the years to come."

Successes ever... (copies released by Downing Street bore no signature)

Mrs Thatcher wrote in reply: "I have received your letter today with great personal sadness. It has, I know, been a very difficult time and I fully understand your reasons for resigning."

"We shall miss the great energy and enthusiasm you have brought to all your work both for the Government and for the party in the country. No one could have worked harder or more loyally, not only for your own department but in support of Government policy as a whole."

"At the Department of Health, you have made a tremendous contribution, among other things, in making all of us realise that better health is not just the responsibility of doctors and nurses but that so much depends on the way we look after ourselves and our families."

"In the country you have been tireless in promoting our cause. Locally, you helped to achieve notable successes in Derbyshire where most recently we won control of Derby City Council."

"I know that you will remain a staunch supporter for everything we are trying to do. We shall continue to work together for what we both believe in."

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# BR admit defective signal work led to Clapham crash

By Tim Jones and Rodney Cowton

British Rail last night formally acknowledged that defective installation of signalling equipment was responsible for Monday's rail crash at Clapham Junction, which yesterday claimed its thirty-fourth victim.

That was stated at the end of three days of hearings by an internal inquiry into the disaster, British Rail said that the equipment itself was not defective.

Meanwhile, rail union leaders condemned British Rail management after it emerged that one witness to the internal inquiry broke down as he explained the pressures under which he and his colleagues worked.

According to a rail union source, the witness told the inquiry that some of the rail staff involved in signal work in the area had worked seven days a week for a month before Monday's crash.

The inquiry, which will pass on its findings to the Department of Transport, has been told, according to the union source, that some signals and telecommunications staff at Clapham had worked 60 hours a week.

Other allegations were that staff worked alone at signal testing, which required six people, had to sort out complex electrical equipment in the relay room beneath the signal box by the light of a torch and forfeited the chance

to work overtime if off sick more than four times a year. Mr Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, said: "Forcing people to work long hours even if sick, and under threats of financial penalties, particularly if the safety of the public is concerned, is a major scandal".

He said the people responsible for imposing such conditions on staff had to be identified.

The union plans to use the public inquiry into the disaster to lodge complaints about long working hours placing "intolerable strains" on staff.

A spokesman for the union said that in the Southern Region highly experienced maintenance crew forfeited additional payments worth up to £30 a week, which had been introduced to retain them, if they missed a single day off work through illness.

"Effectively, they have to work an additional shift every week in order to bring up their pay to the rates enjoyed by the rest of industry. At best it's daft and at worst dangerous".

Mr Neil Milligan, general secretary of ASLEF, the train drivers' union, said 60-hour weeks were not uncommon. "It is a direct consequence of monetarist policy that British Rail has not been recruiting the staff it needs in order to balance the books. As trav-

ellers in the Southern Region know to their cost, it has resulted in 55 commuter trains being taken out of service. We shall certainly be making these complaints known to the public inquiry."

The track on which Monday's collision occurred was reopened yesterday afternoon after having been closed for the second time this week.

After the disaster on Monday morning the main line from Clapham Junction towards the South-west was closed until Wednesday morning while the wreckage was cleared.

But the track on which the collision had occurred was closed again on Thursday morning because a further signal fault had been reported. That was caused by an over-sensitive detector unnecessarily setting signals at red.

Although that was repaired by about midday on Thursday, engineers began a comprehensive testing of the signalling system in the area around the site of the crash, and Southern Region said the line would not reopen until they were satisfied that the signalling system was working perfectly. As a result it was another 24 hours before the track was re-opened.

The latest victim of the crash was named as Mr Stephen Dyer, 35, of Downlands Close, Southampton, who died in hospital.

# Christmas fare for Thatcher



Mrs Margaret Thatcher accepting a decoratively wrapped turkey, handed over at 10 Downing Street yesterday by Mr David Newton, of the British Turkey Federation.

# Prince's charity loses grant

By Alan Hamilton

An inner-city charity launched and headed by the Prince of Wales is facing closure because its main source of funding is being cut off at the end of the year.

New managers brought in by the Prince to reorganize and improve the efficiency of the charitable trusts which bear his name have decided to withdraw their £40,000-a-year support for Inner City Aid, on the ground of what is described unofficially as its disappointing performance.

Canon Sebastian Charles, director of the Inner City Trust, said the organization's trustees, would meet early in the New Year to decide its future. Its work, he said, had been "put in suspended animation" until then. The

charity was set up in 1986 with the impetuous brief of improving the built environment in inner cities.

It has become involved in a small number of projects, including housing improvement schemes, which are expected to continue with funding from other sources.

Mr Tom Sheehane, director of the Prince's Trust, the umbrella body which runs the Prince's charities, said yesterday that from the start of next year, the emphasis of their work on housing and the homeless would switch from fund-raising to the setting up of an advisory committee to be known as the Prince's Housing Advisory Group, which would seek to promote good practice in the field.

Inner City Aid has been ill-fated from birth. Thanks to an administrative bungle, it was launched by the Prince on the same day he launched another charity, the Prince's Youth Business Trust, headed by Lord Boardman, chairman of National Westminster Bank.

In the first year, Lord Boardman's committee raised £2.5 million, while Inner City Aid attracted little more than £30,000. Both were chasing funds from the same sources.

In a move to simplify the bureaucracy and cut out overlapping, the Prince's Trust and its associated Royal Jubilee Trusts, previously run by five separate committees, will now be run by one management board, with the Prince as president.

# Space agency cash battle resolved

By Pearce Wright, Science Editor

A year-long dispute was settled yesterday over Britain's refusal to increase payments for research to the European Space Agency.

At a meeting of the agency council, the other 12 member countries accepted an offer from Britain agreeing to an annual 5 per cent rise in the agency's budget over the next three years, in return for an

independent review of the costs and management of the space programme.

Britain will have contributed more than £80 million to the space agency's budget of £1.3 billion this year.

The dispute began last year when the Government refused totally to collaborate in a £7 billion project aimed at a European

vehicle by the turn of the century.

It also expressed reservations about proposed increases in spending on a scientific scheme, Horizon 2000. The project is planned to cover the next 20 years, involving missions orbiting telescopes and interplanetary space probes at a cost of £2 billion.



Almost nothing is known for certain about the man who has influenced millions down the centuries...

Next Saturday a special Christmas edition of the Sunday Times magazine will be published with The Times. In it, a number of eminent scholars, including the Bishop of Durham, Donald Cupitt and Edward Norman, look at the historical evidence and attempt to answer the question: who was Jesus?

Is Christmas still a pagan festival? In the same issue, Anthony Burgess discusses what has become of Christianity in the centuries since "Christ's most astonishing and unacceptable act - the miracle of the last supper", and looks to the future of the western world's greatest religion.

The Times has many other treats in store this Christmas. Indeed, on Boxing Day it will be the only quality newspaper on sale. To secure your copies over the whole Christmas period, place an order with your newsagent today.

WIN £56,000

**Portfolio PLUS Accumulator**  
 Yesterday's prize was unclaimed; Accumulator rises to £56,000, and there is the weekly prize of £8,000. Page 25.

# Police move on child abuse

By Peter Evans, Home Affairs Correspondent

Eight specialist teams are being set up across the Metropolitan Police force as part of a joint effort with other agencies against child abuse.

Sir Peter Imbert, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, said yesterday a code of practice jointly recognized by police and social services in a number of London boroughs included the development of joint investigative techniques.

The policy reflected an intention to protect and care for the victim, rehabilitate the family and deal with the offender.

"Under this scheme, a police officer for every division in our force is charged with the responsibility for approaching his or her opposite number in social services", Sir Peter told a meeting of senior police and

social workers brought together in London by the National Children's Home.

The various inquiries in the wake of the tragic deaths of Jasmine Beckford, Heidi Kosoda, Tyrone Hendy and more recently Kimberly Carline caused the Metropolitan Police to examine its own procedures and relationships with Social Services.

The notion of working together, strongly advocated both before and after the Cleveland child abuse inquiry, was one with which the Metropolitan Police and the police service in general was very familiar. It had been a cornerstone of formal planning for nearly half a decade.

"What is perhaps different about the development of inter-agency co-operation advocated in the Butler-Sloss

report is the need for the ready acceptance that no single agency has pre-eminence responsibility for child abuse.

This could leave some of us, who like both clarity and control, feeling just a little uncomfortable and perhaps even ineffective.

"Co-ordination of activity across services in such circumstances calls for a truly co-operative spirit within all the agencies concerned, and a real sensitivity for the problems of the other organizations involved.

"This lack of clarity which the philosophy may initially produce, and the need to subjugate one's own organization to others, I believe will be one of the main obstacles we face as we all begin to move closer together in tackling child abuse."

# Police to review riot procedure

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Reporter

Chief constables and Scotland Yard commanders are to review police strategies for riot control following the handling of the demonstration outside News International's plant at Wapping, east London, two years ago.

Plans for the review are being drawn up as the Crown Prosecution Service and police finalize a list of 24 to 26 officers who face charges of assault after complaints at the demonstration.

Summonses are expected to be served against them after Christmas and the delay in telling officers who will and who will not be charged is likely to rouse fresh London police criticism of the handling of the inquiry conducted by Northamptonshire police.

Earlier this week the authority confirmed there would be charges but gave no details.

The policing review will centre on a manual drawn up by the Association of Chief Police Officers and used by all forces.

# Safe deposit robbery case

# Staff all in plot, court told

The £40 million Knightsbridge safe deposit robbery was to be pulled off with the knowledge and consent of everyone who worked there, a Central Criminal Court jury was told yesterday.

The alleged mastermind behind Britain's biggest raid, Valerio Vicci, aged 33, said he was told by his superiors that the manager, the supervisor, and two security guards were all in on the plot.

He told the jury: "I was told everyone would co-operate. I thought they were joking and I started to laugh. I asked who was the inside man and they said again: 'Everyone'."

Mr Vicci, an Italian, said he was hired by a former soldier called Gerry, and an Arab businessman, Abu Sharif, an Arab businessman, to plan and carry out the robbery. At first, he thought they were "playing a game".

But as they started to produce maps and documents relating to the safe deposit centre, he realised they were serious.

Mr Vicci said: "They told me that in the end everyone would be happy". The box

holders would be able to make greatly inflated insurance claims if the "robbery" was successful.

Mr Vicci said: "They asked me what I thought were the chances of success. I told them if everyone was co-operating it would be a case of walking in and walking out. The chances of success were 100 per cent."

The two men promised Mr Vicci a third of the proceeds in return for leading the gang.

He said: "Their intention was just to show, in the eyes of the law, that the boxes had been forcefully opened. The contents of the boxes they were talking about were jewellery, gold, paintings, anything."

Mr Vicci, of no fixed address in this country, denies robbery and firearms charges. The prosecution alleges that he led a gang which stole valuables worth at least £40 million from the safe deposit centre on July 12 last year.

Mr Vicci said he met Gerry and Sharif in May last year. They asked him about safe deposit box centres. The men

showed him maps of the Knightsbridge safe deposit centre where Mr Vicci was a customer. He was also shown copies of instructions to security guards on how they should react to a robbery.

Mr Vicci said he was asked to draw up a report on how the centre could be robbed.

A week later, he handed it over, although, he said, he had still not been told why the two men wanted this information.

"I was fascinated. It looked like a joke. To be honest, I thought something unlawful was going on."

In early June, he met the men at a hotel in Kensington and he was asked if he would carry out the robbery. "I knew what I should answer. But that time I said yes", Mr Vicci told the court.

Also in the dock are Parvez Latif, aged 31, owner of the safe deposit box centre, of Alverstone, Willesden, north-west London, David Poble, aged 48, of Spear Road, Wandsworth, south London, and Peter O'Donoghue, aged 34, of St John's Wood High Street. They all deny robbery and possessing firearms.

# Higgins' fare dodge charge is withdrawn

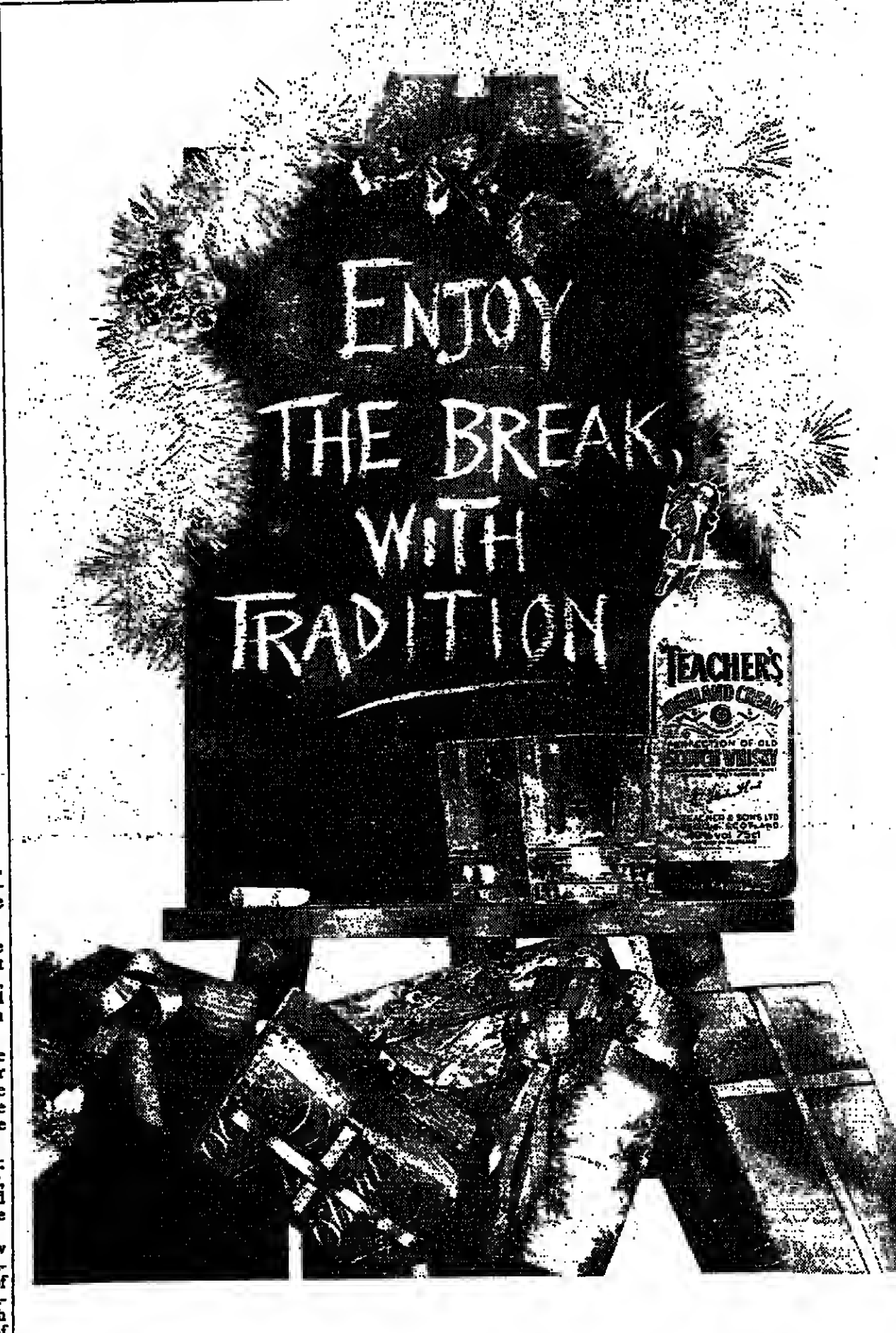
A charge against Alex Higgins, the snooker player, of allegedly refusing to pay a taxi fare was dropped yesterday.

Miss Janet Boston, for the prosecution, told Bow Street magistrates, central London, that Mr Higgins and a friend hailed a cab just before 2am on November 25 this year.

"A dispute occurred as to the amount of the fare with Mr Higgins offering £1 and the cab driver insisting that the right money £2.20 should be paid."

However, Miss Boston said: "Having looked carefully, those instructing have decided there is insufficient evidence of dishonesty to proceed."

Mr Higgins, of Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, had been accused of dishonestly making off without having paid and with intent to avoid payment of £2.20.



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 INVENTORY CONSISTS OF: 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY PERSIAN RUGS AND CARPETS FROM THE MORE IMPORTANT EATING AREAS OF THE EAST, FINE CONTEMPORARY AND NOMADIC RUGS INCLUDING FAB LOU'S SILK RUGS AND CARPETS WITH ENTRIES FROM OTHER SOURCES.  
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# Moore unfolds Bill aimed at cutting benefit for workshy

By Jill Sherman, Social Services Correspondent

The Government yesterday introduced a tough cost-cutting package of measures aimed at taking the workshy off unemployment benefit and into, if necessary, lower paid jobs.

Under the Social Security Bill 1988-89, which will save the Government £140 million, people claiming unemployment benefit will have to show that they are "actively seeking work", or risk losing benefit.

Claimants will also be unable to turn down a job merely because of the rates of pay. The Bill also includes a clause to extend the upper age limit for entitlement to mobility allowance from 75 to 80 and to eliminate sex discrimination in occupational pension schemes.

Launching the Bill yesterday Mr John Moore, Secretary of State for Social Services, said that under the measures, which reflected "major changes in the unemployment market", at least 50,000 people were expected to be taken off unemployment registers.

He said that a recent London Labour Market Survey showed that 25 per cent of the unemployed interviewed had not looked for work in the previous week and nearly half had not looked in the previous four weeks. Five per cent had not looked for work at all, Mr Moore said.

The 1987 Labour Force Survey showed that 37,000 claimants were not seeking work actively and unemployment statistics published on Thursday showed that there were 700,000 unfilled vacancies, he said.

Under Clause 7 in the Bill, claimants will now have to demonstrate that they have taken steps to find a job within, in most cases, the last seven to 14 days.

Initially claimants will have to "illustrate in conversation" that they have registered with an employment agency, visited a Jobcentre or applied for a job. Evidence that they have read newspapers and journals looking for job vacancies will also be considered.

If the claimant adviser in the unemployment benefit office suspects they are being dishonest he can ask the claimant to produce evidence of letters of application or a record of telephone calls to prospective employers.

In some cases the advisers which can wreck a young life. For once in the homeless trap it is merely a vicious downward spiral with no escape, except through places like Centre Point", he said, referring to a London hostel for homeless young people.

"This hits exactly the work of places like Centre Point and inevitably the support from Charity Projects - in bald figures a lot of income of around £30,000 a year."

The Prince indicated that he would be making the difficulties facing teenagers one of his favourite causes. "Nobody becomes homeless by choice - so utterly broke that they are reduced to begging... nobody."

"True, they come to London in the hope that they can find a job. But more often than out it is because they have been forced to leave home, sexually abused or harassed. London is often their first choice - and their worst - but they don't know until they have got here."

He complained that many charitable projects set up to help teenagers did not receive the attention and support won by many other causes. "Don't ask me why but most adults are embarrassed to admit that they were ever a teenager, let alone admit that they may have made mistakes like any other kid at that age", the Prince said.

"Mention youth or teenagers and most people switch off."

Mr Moore said that he would expect all those claiming unemployment benefit to actively seek work on a weekly basis. The timing could, however, depend on the geographical area and the local market.

Under Clause 8 people who have exhausted their entitlement to unemployment benefit will requalify when they have worked for 16 hours or more in at least 13 of the 26 weeks immediately before a further claim.

At present the unemployed can requalify if they have worked 16 hours a week for 13 weeks in any period over a number of years.

Clause 9 of the Bill prevents unemployed people turning down jobs merely because of the rate for the job, after a maximum of 13 weeks.

Mr Moore said that the maximum period before benefit would be withdrawn could be extended in special cases depending on job availability but it could be less than 13 weeks.

Under existing legislation unemployed people have to provide a good cause for refusing a job offer but pay will no longer be considered a "good cause". The clause will effectively stop those in highly paid specialized jobs refusing lower paid work such as dustmen or cleaners.

It closes a loophole highlighted by the case of Dr Julius Tomlin, the Czech dissident philosopher. He lost an appeal against the withdrawal of benefit after he had spent most of a year

studying in the Bodleian Library Oxford while trying to get an academic post. A person who has been out of work continuously for 12 months will be able to take up a job and then give it up within a prescribed period if it does not work out without being disqualified for unemployment benefits.

Under Clause 18 employers and insurance companies will have to pay a greater proportion of compensation awards for industrial accidents and injuries.

At the moment social security benefits are often paid to a person after an accident, injury or disease. However, they may also be compensated by their employer through an insurer. At the moment the employer can deduct part or all of the value of some social security benefits from the compensation award, leading to a double compensation.

Under the new legislation the Government will be able to recover from the employer the full costs of certain social security benefits during the period before the settlement. The victim will continue to receive his full benefit entitlement although the move is expected to save the Government £38 million, Mr Moore said.

However, figures published by the Department of Social Security yesterday show that some employees could lose under the new laws. A person on invalidity benefit, for example, would get £647 less under the new recovery scheme if the settlement took three years.

A government commission survey carried out by Touche Ross management consultants estimated that employers' insurance premiums could rise between 8 and 16 per cent.

Clause 19 provides for the implementation of the EEC directive on equal treatment for men and women in occupational pension schemes.

However, Mr Moore made it clear that the Government would be able to introduce narrow exemptions. Schemes would not be required to provide widowers' benefits on the same terms as for widows.

The directive did not require equality of pension age as long as the state scheme had unequal pension ages.

# Epping fuels Tory fears over next poll

By Robin Oakley, Political Editor

Conservatives were yesterday looking anxiously at the forthcoming poll in Richmond, Yorkshire, poll after the Epping Forest by-election saw a sharp drop in their share of the vote and indicated some revival for centre party politics.

Meanwhile Labour was back on the ropes, having been beaten into third place and failed to make any progress in the Epping seat only a month after losing a 19,500 majority to the Scottish nationalists in Glasgow Govan.

Though Mr Steve Norris, a former MP, won the Epping seat for the Conservatives he did so with a majority of just 4,504, compared with the 21,513 margin enjoyed by the late Sir John Biggs-Davison at the last general election.

Too much should not be read into the results after a poll of only 49 per cent, but only in one by-election contest in the last parliament - at Greenwich - did the Conservative share of the vote drop by a bigger margin.

Though there was no mass protest vote, only 13,000 voters turned out to support the Conservative candidate, compared with 31,500 at the last election.

The Tory share of the vote fell by 22 per cent from 61 per cent to 39 per cent; Labour's share remained identical at 18 per cent, but the Democrats (SLD) put their share of the vote up from the 19 per cent the Alliance had at the last election to 26 per cent.

The two former Alliance parties between them won just 433 votes short of the Tory total in what was the fifth safest Tory seat in the country, a point which underlines their ability to cut each other's throats and the problems they face in making a breakthrough with a by-election victory. The Owenite SDP managed only 12 per cent of the vote.

Conservative strategists will be alarmed at the Epping implications for Richmond, where a by-election is due in the spring after Mr Leon Brittan leaves in January to take up his post as a European Commissioner.

The result indicates disillusion with the Tory performance in this Parliament but not yet any active movement against the Government.

Three factors will worry them. The first is that the Democrats appear to be back in business and seeing off the SDP. Protest voters can start taking Mr Paddy Ashdown's party seriously again as a suitable vehicle after the Epping result.

Secondly, the pre-Christmas apathy of the Epping contest will not apply to the Richmond contest. Thirdly, there is frequently a bigger swing against a defending party if the departed MP has not died but has left politics for a lucrative post elsewhere. Though Mr Brittan has been a popular and hard-working constituency MP that would certainly apply in his case.

Labour's disastrous showing in the Epping contest despite the Government's economic troubles on interest rates and the balance of payments was compounded yesterday by an opinion poll



Mr Steve Norris, a former Tory MP, savouring his victory in Epping Forest yesterday with his wife Vicky, and sons

showing the Tories in an 11 per cent lead nationally and with Mr Kinnock's personal rating down to its lowest level ever at 26 per cent.

That confirms that Labour, unlike Opposition parties previously, is failing to profit from the sharp fall in the economic optimism index.

A dismal third place at the stage of a Parliament where Oppositions expect to prosper can offer little hope of Labour mounting an effective challenge at the next election and it

is bound to sap morale. The result may, however, help Mr Kinnock and those responsible for the party's policy review to push through more radical changes than the left had previously been prepared to permit.

The SDP will claim that it is gathering support, having improved on its 5 per cent share of the vote in the earlier Kensington by-election. It had claimed Epping as its natural territory and must be disappointed by this result as the crunch point for the party approaches.

Members have to decide now whether the party is going anywhere and whether they should renew subscriptions due next month.

Mr Peter Brooke, the Conservative Party chairman, said: "We have lost half the safe seats we have defended since 1979. To hold Epping solidly is very encouraging at this stage in the parliament."

Mr Paddy Ashdown was jubilant over his party's showing. He said that had it not been for the intervention of

EPPING	
Steven J Norris (C)	13,183
Andrew J Thompson (Dem)	8,679
Stephen W Murray (Lab)	6,261
Michael G Pittman (SDP)	4,077
Andrew M Simms (Green)	672
Tina Wingfield (Inf)	286
Lord David Smith (Loony)	226
Jaded Moore (Rainbow Ad)	83
Bryan G Goodier (Ind)	16
Con majority	4,504
Percentage of vote: C 39%, Lab 19%, Dem 29%, SDP 12%, Oth 4%	

1987: Sir J Biggs-Davison (C) 31,536, A Humphries (SDP/All) 10,223, S Murray (Lab) 9,499, H Dennis (Green) 582, Con Maj 21,513.

Dr David Owen's SDP with its "spoiling tactics" splitting the centre vote, the Tories would have faced a real threat of defeat.

He appealed to Dr Owen to stand aside at Richmond to give the Democrats a clear run at the Tories.

He said: "This historic result confirms our position as the main opposition to the Tories in a large number of seats. We are established in second place - and we are on our way."

"We are now poised to take over from the Labour Party as the major opposition to the Tories. Epping has shown that Dr Owen's efforts have petered out."

A Labour spokesman insisted: "It is impossible to read anything into this by-election except the massive drop in turn-out and the dramatic loss of confidence in the Government."

"Its effect on Labour will be to reinforce our determination to get our policies right for the 1990s"

Something stirs, page 10

# Prince speaks for homeless youth

Prince Edward gave a warning yesterday that changes in the welfare benefits system would add to the plight of some of the 30,000 homeless people aged between 16 and 19 on London's streets.

In a speech before presenting an £800,000 cheque to Charity Projects in London, he said such people "are prey to pimps and pushers. By accident I am sure, their plight is about to get worse."

"Far, thanks to the reorganization of the welfare benefits - a much-needed effort in the long-term - one or two anomalies have appeared, one of which is the ending of any sort of benefits to 16 to 17-year-olds. This blow is only one of many

which can wreck a young life. For once in the homeless trap it is merely a vicious downward spiral with no escape, except through places like Centre Point", he said, referring to a London hostel for homeless young people.

"This hits exactly the work of places like Centre Point and inevitably the support from Charity Projects - in bald figures a lot of income of around £30,000 a year."

The Prince indicated that he would be making the difficulties facing teenagers one of his favourite causes. "Nobody becomes homeless by choice - so utterly broke that they are reduced to begging... nobody."

"True, they come to London in the hope that they can find a job. But more often than out it is because they have been forced to leave home, sexually abused or harassed. London is often their first choice - and their worst - but they don't know until they have got here."

He complained that many charitable projects set up to help teenagers did not receive the attention and support won by many other causes. "Don't ask me why but most adults are embarrassed to admit that they were ever a teenager, let alone admit that they may have made mistakes like any other kid at that age", the Prince said.

"Mention youth or teenagers and most people switch off."

Mr Clark said that he was glad that the minister had finally succumbed to pressure and come to the House.

It was pleasing that at long last the Government had admitted the seriousness of the matter which had been brought to such a level by the indiscreet and irresponsible statement by the then Under Secretary of State for Health which had devastated the industry.

Whatever the compensation, the indiscretion would have a long and lasting effect on many egg and poultry producers. It was ironic that the taxpayer would have to foot the bill for her gaffe.

# Gibraltar witness in libel win

Mrs Carmen Proetta, who gave an eye-witness account of the shaming of IRA terrorists at the Gibraltar inquest, won substantial libel damages in the High Court yesterday over vice and drugs allegations.

The Protection of Privacy Bill will be introduced by Mr John Browne, Conservative MP for Winchester, who came top of the recent ballot for private members' Bills.

It would create a law similar to that applying to libel and slander. Citizens who had statements printed about them which were true but an apparent invasion of their privacy could sue for damages.

The courts would then decide whether the publication of that private information was legitimately in the public interest.

Mr Browne, whose own marital affairs have received extensive press coverage, is guaranteed a second reading vote on the Bill, probably in January, by virtue of his position in the ballot.

While the Government is likely to remain neutral, he can expect the support of

more than 300 MPs of all parties who earlier this year signed a Commons motion supporting the concept of a right to privacy.

His sponsors include Mr Ivan Lawrence, QC, and Mr Peter Temple-Morris, the prominent Tory barrister MP, Mr Merlyn Rees, the former Labour Home Secretary, Mr Denis Healey, former Labour Chancellor, and Sir Bernard Braine, "Father of the House".

Mr Tony Worthington, the Labour MP for Clydebank and Milngavie, who came second in the ballot, has announced that he is introducing a Bill giving a statutory right of reply to victims of unfair media coverage.

# Citizens' privacy Bill to curb press violations

By Martin Fletcher, Political Reporter

Radical legislation to prevent the media violating the privacy of individual citizens is to be brought before the Commons and stands a strong chance of success.

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Mr Tony Worthington, the Labour MP for Clydebank and Milngavie, who came second in the ballot, has announced that he is introducing a Bill giving a statutory right of reply to victims of unfair media coverage.

Mr Browne yesterday cited the harassment of the wife of Mr Terry Waite, the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy who was kidnapped in Beirut, as one "grotesque" example of invasion of privacy.

Another was the identification of the victim in the Ealing vicarage rape case. "This was

# Air-lesson gift tokens 'a success'

By Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent

More than 30 flying clubs around Britain have joined forces to offer Christmas gift tokens to enable would-be pilots to take their first flying lesson.

The vouchers, costing either £30 or £45, entitle the holder to a lesson in a single-engine aircraft.

Mr Richard Gyselynek, director of the Wycombe Air Centre who developed the gift token scheme, yesterday said it had already been "a phenomenal success".

Anyone who catches the flying bug after their initial flight could then enrol for a full private pilot's licence course.

Correction  
A report yesterday on legal arguments about the Irish decision not to extradite Father Patrick Ryan should have stated that the Dublin government was not prepared to concede to London's demands to do away with the Irish attorney general's jurisdiction function an extradition warrants.

# Minister reaffirms promise on embryo research Bill

Mr Andrew Mackay (East Berkshire, C) said that it was a disgrace that there were so many late abortions. The reason was that it was so difficult even for innocent girls to obtain abortions earlier. If there were an increase in request for abortion before 12 weeks, as in continental countries, late abortions would be reduced.

Women should have a choice in making this horrendous, emotional decision, but that choice was not made easier by interference by ideologists, most of whom were genetically incapable of having a baby.

If legislation were passed to restrict abortion further, it would mean that affluent middle class women would go abroad.

"It would be the worst piece of class legislation imaginable because the people who would be the most hard hit would be the innocent, inarticulate, relatively uneducated, and often potentially single parents with nobody to turn to or look after them."

Mr Maria Fyfe (Glasgow, Paisley, Lab) said that by going down the road of outlawing abortion, MPs would drive women to the back streets, to the knitting needle, the syringe and the knife.

Miss Ann Widdecombe (Walsingham, C) said that she intended to introduce a private Member's Bill, taking up Mr Alton's Abortion (Amendment) Bill at the point where it had been abandoned.

# Urgent moves to help poultry farmers

Immediate talks are to take place between the Ministry of Agriculture and poultry farmers to work out a scheme to help the industry but by the end of the year, Mr John MacGregor, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said in a Commons statement. He promised that details of the scheme would be given on Monday.

He emphasized a number of times that his proposals to help the industry were not compensation. He was dealing with an abnormal market.

Opposition MPs had demanded a statement after complaining that the media were being briefed on the situation, but the House Commons was not being informed.

Mr David Clark, Opposition spokesman on agriculture, said that the problem could have been eased two weeks earlier if the Prime Minister had done her duty, then and sacked Mrs Edina Currie, Under Secretary of State for Health, whose indiscreet and irresponsible comments had caused the problem.

Mr MacGregor said in his statement that during the last two weeks a great deal of uncertainty had arisen over the health implications for consumers and this has caused a sharp decline in egg sales.

The Government had taken steps, through a series of newspapers advertisements, to reiterate the advice of the Chief Medical Officer and to ensure that the facts were clear to everyone.

had on the market, the Government has also decided, as a wholly exceptional measure, to introduce short-term measures which will enable eggs to be moved so as to help support the market at a critical period. We are entering into immediate discussions with the industry with a view to implementing within a few days. I am also in touch with the European Commission in respect of any Community aspects of these arrangements.

He would make a Commons statement about the scheme on Monday and there would be no announcement of details before then.

Mr Clark said that he was glad that the minister had finally succumbed to pressure and come to the House.

It was pleasing that at long last the Government had admitted the seriousness of the matter which had been brought to such a level by the indiscreet and irresponsible statement by the then Under Secretary of State for Health which had devastated the industry.

Whatever the compensation, the indiscretion would have a long and lasting effect on many egg and poultry producers. It was ironic that the taxpayer would have to foot the bill for her gaffe.

The Government had no alternative but to compensate those egg producers whose businesses had suffered as a result of

# SALMONELLA



ministerial incompetence. What compensation would there be for workers made redundant?

A long-term solution was needed to the problem given the situation that the Government had created. The only answer was to try to reduce the supply of eggs which, tragically, meant culling a fair proportion of the British poultry flock.

What plans had the minister to pay compensation to those producers who would be forced to gas their chickens, many of them healthy, in order to reduce the stock? Had the minister any idea how much that would cost? Would it be £10 million, or the

# ABORTION

The Government will honour its promise to bring forward legislation during this Parliament on human embryo research and the Warnock report, Mr David Mackay, Minister of State for Health, told MPs.

Winding up a debate on embryo research and the law on abortion, he said that there was a clear recognition of the need to have a framework within which such research and development was permitted.

The Government continued to regard abortion as a matter for private Member's legislation. It would not be appropriate for the Government to seek in any way to take over responsibility.

It was clear that the line drawn by the Infant Life Preservation Act, based on 28 weeks, was not the right one and 24 weeks was now right. The Government accepted that.

Mr John Watts (Slough, C), opening the debate, said that after 21 glorious years of the Abortion Act 1967, 2.6 million unborn children had been killed under its cover.

Out of that appalling total, only 123 abortions had been performed in an emergency to save the life of the mother.

£40 million which the National Farmers' Union had put forward?

Mr MacGregor said that the Government had been taking a number of steps since the summer to deal with a new and grave problem identified with what is now termed salmonella. It was an abnormal market.

In normal circumstances the scheme would have taken weeks, if not months to formulate. It had taken a little time to produce the scheme because of the most unusual situation and the state of the market.

"It is wrong to call it compensation. It is a measure to deal with the market situation itself (Labour laughter). There are many practical difficulties about a scheme of this kind. That is why I would not wish to comment on the details until Monday."

Mr Nicholas Winterton (Macclesfield, C) said that the tragedy was that Mrs Currie had not apologized for an error. If she had, the House would have forgiven her.

Was the Government liable because of a mistake by a minister?

Mr MacGregor: The announcement implies no acceptance of any legal liability on the part of the Government.

The risk from consuming eggs is very small and I hope that the public will go on consuming eggs as avidly as they always have, and as I always do.

Mr David Steel (Worcestershire, Lib) said that it had been suggested

that there was a casual victim of market forces, but it was more complex.

"Some of us will never understand why an instant apology was not made."

There had been about one outbreak a week, while 200 million eggs a week were consumed.

"The restoration of a sense of proportion is more important than shovelling taxpayers' money at it."

Mr MacGregor agreed that it was important to keep a sense of perspective, or to restore it.

Mr Dafydd Wigley (Carmarthen, Pl C), on the destruction of poultry, asked the minister to appeal to producers not to take irrevocable action until the necessary practicalities about the scheme had been worked out.

Mr MacGregor said that that was precisely why he had signalled the Government's intention. They had wanted to give assurance over the weekend.

Sir Peter Emery (Hendon, C) asked for a direct contradiction of what Mrs Currie had said, that most egg production was affected by salmonella.

Mr MacGregor: It is not the case that most eggs are affected.

Mr Patrick Coward (South Staffordshire, C) said that this had been an outbreak of hysteria. There was no need for people to worry about ordinary diets.

Mr MacGregor: He is right in saying that people should return to their normal practices, taking full notice of the advertisements we have put in the newspapers this morning.

# Embryo research Bill

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Out of that appalling total, only 123 abortions had been performed in an emergency to save the life of the mother.

"I do not believe that it was the intention of the House in 1967 to legalize abortion on demand but in practice that is what has happened."

The House had demonstrated by a substantial majority in the last session that it had the will to

# ABORTION

The Government will honour its promise to bring forward legislation during this Parliament on human embryo research and the Warnock report, Mr David Mackay, Minister of State for Health, told MPs.

Winding up a debate on embryo research and the law on abortion, he said that there was a clear recognition of the need to have a framework within which such research and development was permitted.

The Government continued to regard abortion as a matter for private Member's legislation. It would not be appropriate for the Government to seek in any way to take over responsibility.

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# Convoys of nuclear fuel 'may be open to terrorist attacks'

By Kerry Gill

Convoys carrying nuclear fuel on Britain's roads could be vulnerable to attack from determined terrorists, a senior industry spokesman said yesterday.

Mr William McLaughlan, director of the transport division of British Nuclear Fuels, admitted that dedicated terror groups might pick on vehicles carrying nuclear material in an attempt to steal the contents and create widespread public panic.

"Any thinking person can see that these lorries could present an obvious target for terrorist attacks", he said in Glasgow.

"It is our job, with the advice of security experts, to ensure that the vehicles are not vulnerable if anybody attempts to attack them."

Asked if BNFL could be absolutely certain that terrorists could not satisfactorily attack a nuclear convoy, Mr McLaughlan replied: "Nobody can be 100 per cent sure. The only thing you can be 100 per cent certain of in this life is that you are going to die."

For all practical reasons, however, a successful breach of security was inconceivable, he added.

Mr McLaughlan was speaking after addressing a meeting of Strathclyde regional councillors about the possibility of nuclear shipments by air from Prestwick airport. BNFL is

considering moving plutonium powder from Prestwick from the mid-1990s after the Thorp fuel reprocessing plant at Sellafield is commissioned in 1992. The flights would constitute part of a contract to supply reprocessed nuclear fuel to Japanese power stations.

During an occasionally ill-tempered meeting, the BNFL executive admitted that the criteria for shipping nuclear material back to Japan were exclusively commercial. The deal for supplying Japanese electricity utilities with fuel is worth £2.5 billion to the British economy.

One option is to fly plutonium out from Prestwick to Japan, while another is to return completed fuel assemblies by sea through an existing terminal at Barrow in Furness, Cumbria.

BNFL says that, if fuel does have to be delivered by air, Prestwick is the preferred option because it is the nearest airport to Sellafield with a runway long enough to accommodate Boeing 747 cargo jets.

However, Strathclyde councillors are concerned about the movement of the fuel by road convoys, protected by armed guards, along the relatively narrow highways of southern Scotland. Many members yesterday argued that Manchester airport, with its motorway link to Cumbria, would be a better choice. Mr Rod

McNab, the Conservative regional councillor for the North Kyle ward, which includes Prestwick airport, said: "I can see an argument that there is a benefit to the whole package — but not to Strathclyde."

"My constituency will end up with the dirty end of the stick. I cannot see why we should. In practical terms, Manchester is the obvious choice."

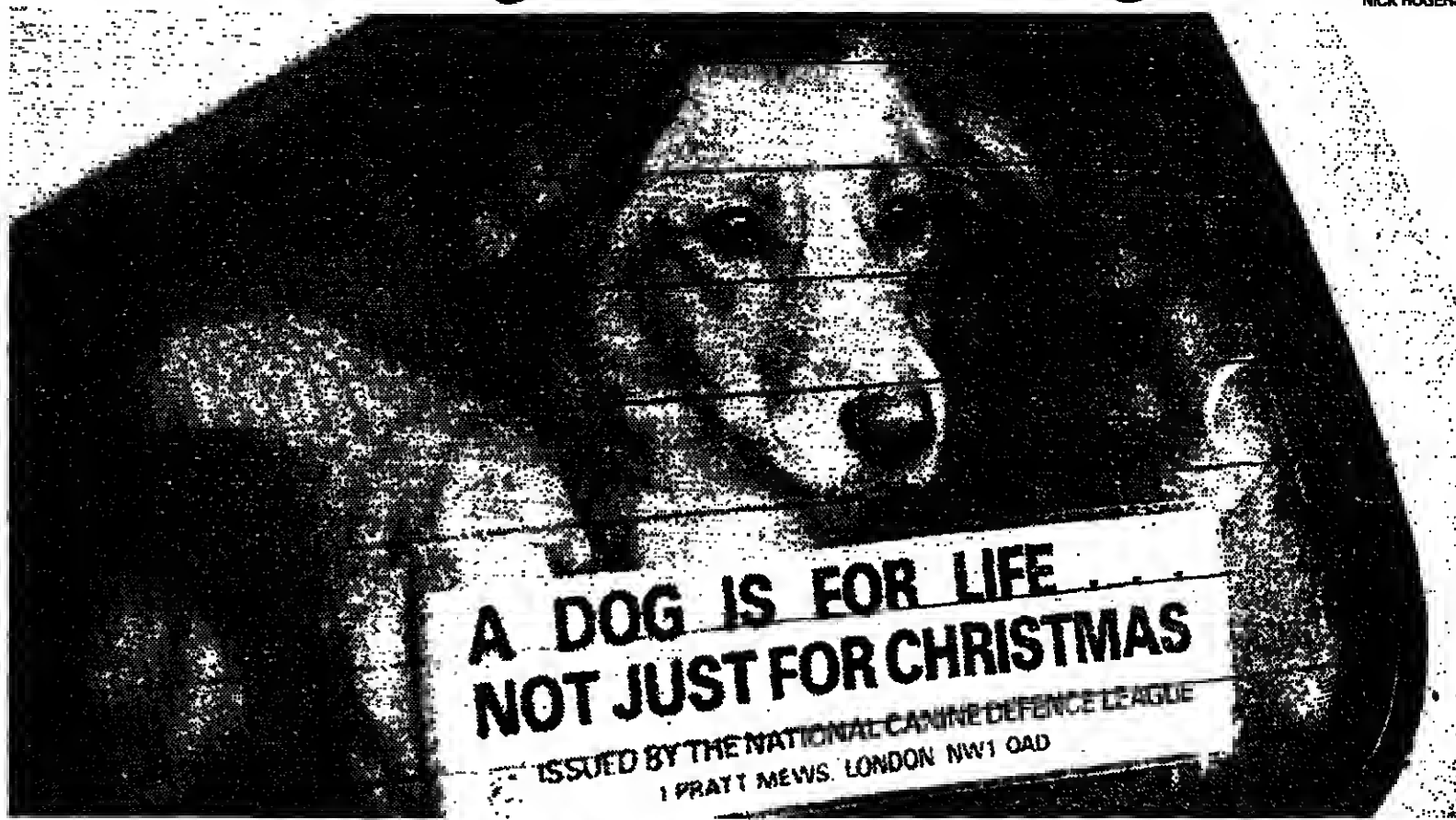
Mr McLaughlan said that plans for the flights had not even developed to the stage where any airport had even been formally approached. If fuel had to be shipped out by aircraft, it would only involve 15 flights per year and would not affect airport operations.

Flying the plutonium power out to Japan from Prestwick is only one option under consideration. International agreements involving Japan and the United States require that plutonium pellets to be flown out in a suitable container can be developed but, should the Japanese want the fuel in completed form, it can be shipped by sea.

Mr John Bailie, Strathclyde Regional Council member for Prestwick, said he was still not convinced of the integrity of available nuclear containers. "I am convinced that the public in southern Scotland do not want armed guards accompanying these vehicles through small villages and on a bad road system."

# Battersea dogs look for willing owners

NICK ROGERS



Dog No 9654, otherwise known as Ginger, on his way with 16 other dogs from Battersea Dogs Home yesterday to a temporary home at Brighton.

By Robin Young

For the first time in its 128-year history, the Battersea Dogs Home is encouraging people to buy dogs for Christmas this year. In previous years the home has always argued that dogs are sad, and often unwanted, Christmas presents.

This year the home is turning away "gifts to the home" — the euphemistic name given to stray animals brought in by members of the public.

The sad truth is that the dogs' home is overrun with dogs. There is kennel accommodation at Battersea for 463 dogs but there are currently more than 700 in residence.

"We are victims of our own pub-

licity", Mr Stephen Danos, the home's spokesman, said yesterday. "We have always told people that just before Christmas is emotionally a bad time to buy a dog. Now we are lucky if we sell 20 in a day, but in a fortnight we received 938. We had to take emergency measures or conditions would have become totally unmanageable."

Yesterday a party of dogs left Battersea to go into overflow accommodation offered by the National Canine Defence League in Brighton.

The Battersea home is hoping to negotiate similar arrangements for some of its dogs with other charities and kennel owners.

Battersea is contractually obliged to

offer shelter to stray dogs taken into custody by the police. The number brought to the home from that source doubled during last week to 70 a day.

In addition to turning away unwanted "gifts" from the public, the home is no longer taking in dogs belonging to people who are on remand, in prison, or staying in hospital.

The administrators of the home are also being forced to consider whether there is any point in taking in sick dogs and giving them intensive veterinary care if all that achieves is to add to the already acute problems of overcrowding in the Battersea kennels.

Colonel Tony Hare, director-general of the dogs home, has announced that the charity is to promote the sale of dogs from its country kennels at Bellmead, Priest Hill, near Old Windsor.

"It is", he said, "a more tranquil environment in which to choose and buy a dog than we can provide at Battersea."

And finally the dogs home in Battersea will, in spite of all its previous warnings against pre-Christmas purchases, be open from 12pm-4pm this Sunday in the hope that responsible owners will come forward to adopt a few more of its huge intake

# P&O accept seamen's damages claim

Seamen yesterday won a £1 million High Court compensation victory against the P&O shipping group.

Ten seamen representing about 1,800 members of the National Union of Seamen (NUS), including 38 who died in the Herald of Free Enterprise sinking last year, were jubilant when the two-week-old case came to a sudden end.

P&O Ferries, which had fought the claim for compensation after the men said they were "locked out" in an industrial dispute three years ago, agreed to submit to judgement.

The decision was announced by Mr Justice Otton by Mr Christopher Clarke, QC, counsel for P&O, on the tenth day of the action. Damages, including those for

the relatives of the dead seamen, will now be assessed by lawyers and terms agreed. The final figure is expected to reach £1 million.

The lockout at Dover came after a dispute and 72-hour strike in December 1985 over terms and conditions.

NUS members have been told that more than half the union's officers will have to be dismissed if they decide to a ballot to remain independent (Tim Jooes writes).

The Unity Trust Bank reported that the union is facing "extremely serious" financial difficulties and their accounts will be more than £217,000 overdrawn unless tough cost-cutting measures are introduced.

In the ballot, which begins next month, the 20,000 members will decide whether to remain independent or to merge with either the National Union of Railwaymen or the Transport and General Workers' union.

Mr Sam McCluskie, NUS leader, has told his executive committee that if the union decides to stand alone up to 20 officials out of 34 will have to be made redundant.

The point was underlined in the Unity report which described staff costs, which are running at 41.5 per cent of the total expenditure, as "very high".

During a dispute with P&O at Dover, the union was fined more than £300,000 and had its assets sequestered.

# Printer seeks redress against union

By Andrew Morgan

A former printer who was expelled from the National Graphical Association after he accepted redundancy terms from News International during the Wapping dispute, took the first step yesterday in seeking compensation in a test case before an industrial tribunal in London.

Mr John Bone, aged 45, was earning £20,000 a year as a photo-composer with Times Newspapers when the union took strike action in January 1986 over the move from

Gray's Inn Road to Wapping. Mr Bone, an NGA member since 1962, told the hearing he was a "very reluctant striker" although he attended picket duties over the next eight months and was even arrested and charged with obstructing the police.

He also wrote a letter to *The Guardian* in which he criticized the stance of News International in the dispute. However, he received only £90 a week strike pay and he was forced to sell his house

and finally moved into a bedsit.

Mr Bone decided to accept redundancy terms of £2,000 and told the union. He was reprimanded and fined £100 in April 1987. He told the hearing he stopped paying his subscriptions because he believed it to be a valueless exercise.

He told the tribunal that when he called the union's call office — a brokerage unit for print jobs — he was told that no work was available for him

after accepting redundancy. The panel was told that the union expelled Mr Bone earlier this year.

His income has been only £2,700 as a director of the *Hyde Park Times*, although he has had other part-time work.

Mr Richard Calland, for Mr Bone, said that if the expulsion was found to be ill-founded, he might apply for possible compensation before another industrial tribunal.

The hearing continues on Monday.

# Europe 'challenge to fish farm trade'

By Kerry Gill

Suppliers to the fast-growing fish farm industry in the Highlands and Islands could lose to foreign competition unless they adopt aggressive marketing tactics.

Scottish companies, in the business of supplying a wide range of goods from boats to buoys, have been warned that the advent of 1992 and the Single European Market means it is all the more important to compete with suppliers from abroad.

The fish farming industry, which is growing rapidly, is expected to produce about 55,000 tonnes of salmon a year by 1993. New markets, such as in France and West Germany, are opening up.

However, the Highlands and Islands Development Board, a supporter of the industry because of its economic value, estimates that Scottish supply companies are losing to foreign competition.

About £20 million a year is spent by fish farms on day-to-day supplies but foreign companies have managed to net almost half of the business, Mr Alastair Alexander, the

board's head of product marketing, said.

Mr Alexander said that local companies ought to be able to make the fish farming industry self-sufficient in supplies and increase exports.

In February, the board is to help 12 companies to take part in the Scottish Fish Farming Conference and Exhibition in Edinburgh, where they hope to persuade the industry to buy Scottish.

Fish farming has created about 1,500 jobs in Scotland and many more will be created by a successful supply industry.

Aggressive marketing was needed, Mr Alexander said. "The fish farming industry is growing at a rapid rate and if companies can supply goods at the right price we will ensure that the revenue and jobs which arise are retained."

"With 1992 and the Single European Market around the corner, it is more important than ever that we maintain a sense of competitiveness. We must safeguard our own markets and go out and sell to the rest of Europe."

# Clash over sale of school rugby pitch

By Douglas Broom, Education Reporter

Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for the Environment, is to be asked to rule on a £10 million development which would strip Toobridge School of what may regard as the finest public school rugby pitch in Britain.

Known as "The Fifty", the school's First XV rugby pitch has achieved legendary status and resistance to its loss is expected from many distinguished old boys of the school, who include Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Attorney General.

The governors want to sell a 19-acre site, including the tree-screened pitch, for development as a housing estate. Part of the £10 million raised by the sale to Bryant Homes would be used to move the turf from "The Fifty" to a new pitch nearer the school.

Tonbridge and Malling District Council has refused planning permission for the scheme and the governors will decide next week on the timing of an appeal to the minister. One source said yesterday: "It is not a question of if we appeal, but when?"

The development, including 36 sheltered flats for the elderly, 43 detached houses and an Edwardian-style crescent of 13 linked houses, would occupy 14 acres, leaving the rest as open space.

Mrs Wendy Burden, the governors' planning consultant, said: "We recognize that this is a conservation area and great trouble has been taken to get the detail of the development right."

Mr Miles Glover, clerk to the governors, said the decision to sell the site, which is half a mile from the main school grounds, had been taken because a planned new relief road would cut it in half.

"Obviously there is a great deal of emotional capital invested in an issue like this", Sir Miles said.

"There will be many Tonbridgeans who will have fond memories of playing on 'The Fifty' but we have to take the long-term view. When the trees have grown there is no reason why the new pitch should not be every bit as good."

The Church Commissioners, who support parochial clergy through stipends, housing and pensions, said that there had been complaints for the past 20 years that quotas had risen.

"Although the quotas are not legally compulsory, we have never heard of anyone refusing to pay them."

# Lose bishop to save church funds, say villagers

By Emma Wilkins

A village in Gloucestershire has proposed a vote of no confidence in its diocesan financial board in a dispute over contributions to church funds.

In a controversy worthy of a Trollope novel, the churchwardens of Arlingham say that they cannot meet the diocese's request for more money. They have suggested dispensing with one of their two bishops to make savings.

The diocese of Gloucester has proposed a general increase of 27 per cent in the annual quotas paid by each of its 320 parishes. The quotas, which are paid voluntarily through collection plates on Sundays, are spent on the clergy's salaries, housing and central administration.

Although parishes are not legally bound to pay, the diocese relies on those regular payments to balance its books.

However, the congregation of 20 villagers from Arlingham has protested at the increase. A meeting of the parochial church council earlier this week proposed a vote of no confidence in the diocesan financial board. It has written to ask the board to explain the increase from £1,700 to £2,256 a year.

Mr John Bircher, a churchwarden whose family has served the church in Arlingham for more than 70 years, criticized the diocese for putting up the quotas. "Our share works out at 32 per cent, which is five times the rate of inflation. It makes the diocese seem like a banana republic. It seems an awful lot

when you consider we no longer have our own vicar — we have to share him with four other churches. We have lost our Church of England village school and our glebe lands."

The Bishop of Tewkesbury, the Right Rev Jeremy Walsh, admitted yesterday that the increases were high. An increased number of clergy justified the rise, he said. Nine extra clergy were taken on last year.

The Church Commissioners, who support parochial clergy through stipends, housing and pensions, said that there had been complaints for the past 20 years that quotas had risen.

"Although the quotas are not legally compulsory, we have never heard of anyone refusing to pay them."

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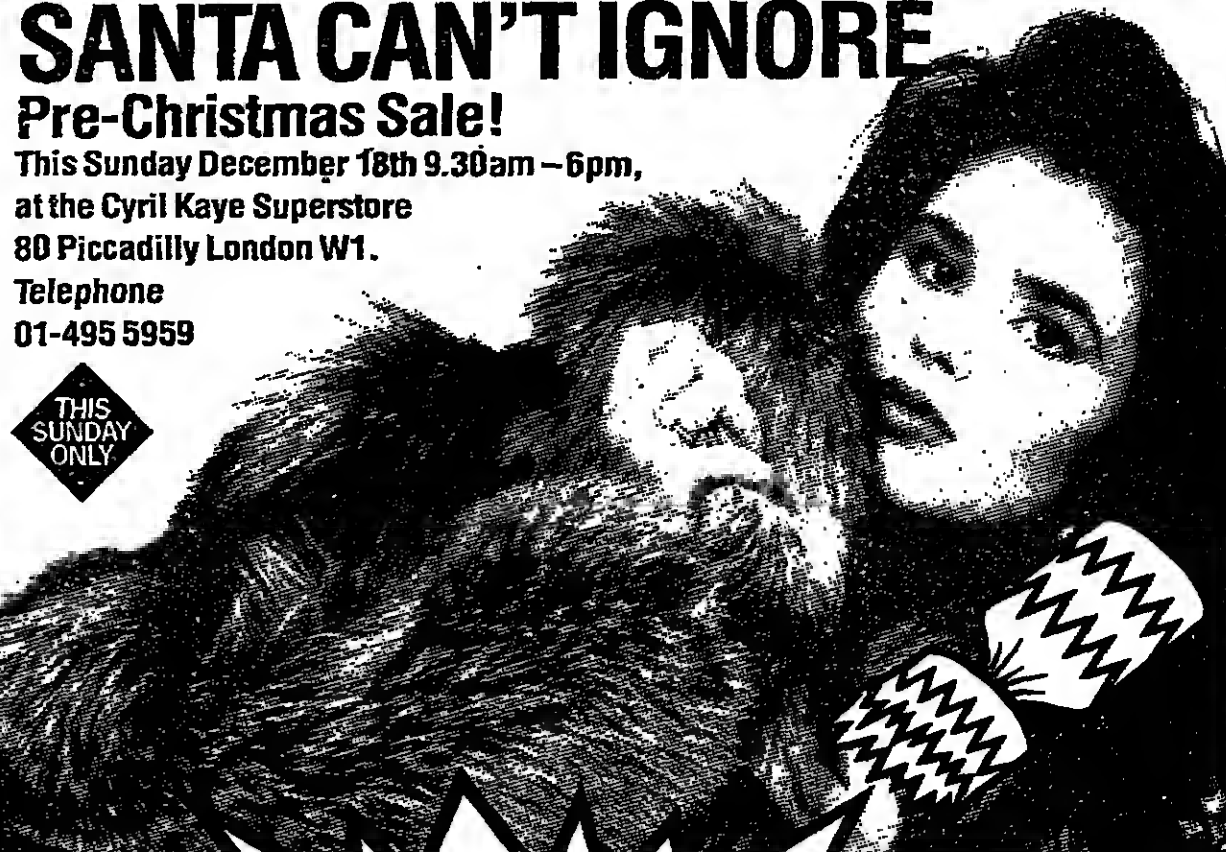
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New European Commissioners get down to work

Portfolios are allocated without the customary blood-letting

From Michael Dynes Brussels

Distribution of the portfolios for the next four-year term of the European Commission have finally been agreed...

At the first working session of the new 17-member Commission in the 13th-century headquarters of the ancient order of Knights Templar...

There were only a few surprises in the allocation of portfolios, achieved without the traditional blood-letting which has marred the inauguration of many previous Commissions.

Herr Martin Bangemann, the

former West German Economics Minister, inherits the mantle of Lord Cockfield in becoming Commissioner for the Internal Market, widely regarded as the most important post.

But the position has been divested of the highly controversial Commission proposals for fiscal approximation, which entails the abolition of Britain's cherished zero rate of value added tax...

Mr Leon Brittan, who replaces Lord Cockfield as Britain's senior Commissioner, has been given charge of competition policy, relations with the European Parliament, and liberalization of financial services.

Competition policy is widely expected to prove extremely delicate, since the Commission is determined to increase its powers

to vet, in advance, all large-scale cross-frontier mergers - an aspiration with which Britain has very little sympathy.

Mr Bruce Millan, the junior Labour Commissioner and former Labour Scottish Secretary, has been put in charge of the Community's greatly expanded regional development fund.

Mr Millan will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of development money, projected to increase to some £9 billion by 1992, much of which will go to the poorer member states in an attempt to avoid a north-south split within the EEC.

Mr Frans Andriessen, the former Budget Commissioner, has been given the External Relations Portfolio, where he will be responsible for negotiations with the Community's trading partners, such as those being conducted in

the current round of multi-lateral trade talks under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Herr Peter Schmidhuber, the junior West German Commissioner, has been put in charge of the Community's budget, and Mr Raymond MacSharry, the new Irish Commissioner, will take responsibility for the Common Agricultural Policy.

A welcome development for Britain is the allocation of responsibility for fiscal affairs and the customs union to Mme Christiane Scrivener, the junior French Commissioner, and veteran Euro MP who has worked on the European Parliament's budget committee. She has indicated that she is sympathetic to the problems faced by Britain over the proposed abolition of zero rating.

Predictions that environment and research and technology would be elevated and given portfolios in their own right have proved unfounded, and many environmentalists will be disappointed that the increasingly high-profile environment job has been given to Signor Carlo Ripa de Meana, the Italian former Commissioner for Culture, who is considered by many observers to be something of a Brussels lightweight.

The Commissioners, who are expected to take up their £80,000 to £100,000-a-year positions on the 13th floor of the Berlaymont, the Community's star-shaped, plate-glass headquarters in Brussels, on January 6, are:

- 1. Jacques Delors, France, Commission President. 2. Mme Christiane Scrivener, France, Fiscal Affairs and the Customs Union. 3. Leon Brittan, UK, Competition Policy, Relations with the European Parliament and Financial Services. 4. Bruce Millan, UK, Regional Development Funds. 5. Martin Bangemann, West Germany, Internal Market. 6. Peter Schmidhuber, West Germany, Budget. 7. Philipp Maria Pandolfi, Italy, Science Research and Development and Telecommunications. 8. Carlo Ripa de Meana, Italy, Environment. 9. Abel Matutes, Spain, Mediterranean Policy, Relations with Latin America and north-south issues. 10. Manuel Marin, Spain, Co-operation and Development (Lome) and Fish. 11. Antonio Cardoso, Portugal, Personnel and Administration, Energy and Small and Medium Enterprises. 12. Mrs Vasso Papatheou, Greece, Employment, Industrial and Social Affairs, and Education. 13. Karel Van Miert, Belgium, Transport, Credit and Investment, and Environmental Protection. 14. Henning Christopherson, Denmark, Economic and Financial Affairs and Co-ordination of the Structural Funds. 15. Frans Andriessen, The Netherlands, External Relations. 16. Raymond MacSharry, Ireland, Agriculture. 17. Jean Dodelinger, Luxembourg, Audio-Visual and Cultural Affairs, Information and Communications and Citizens Europe.

Leading article, page 11

PLO is in from the cold as talks with US begin

From Christopher Walker, Tunis

The Palestine Liberation Organization completed its recent transformation from reviled terrorist group to respectable partner in the peace process yesterday when a delegation of its senior officials met US government representatives for the first time in public since 1975.

The historic encounter, which many on the Arab side see as offering new hope for the eventual resolution of the 40-year-old Palestinian problem, appropriately took place in the residential suburb of Carthage which, in its days of ancient splendour, was the scene of much blood-letting.

The two delegations met in the sumptuous surroundings of a Tunisian government villa. None of the best known PLO leaders took part because they had not yet arrived back from the UN session in Geneva.

Despite the media razzmatazz which accompanied the re-establishing of links severed on the instructions of Dr Henry Kissinger when he was Secretary of State, senior US officials were at pains to stress that the new dialogue is unlikely to move forward significantly until after President-elect George Bush takes control next month.

The US side then expects that talks will concentrate on ways of facilitating direct contacts between the PLO and the Israelis, as well as between the Israelis and their other Arab neighbours. Senior Moscow

sources have made clear they expect the dialogue to lead to the convening of the long-awaited international Middle East peace conference before the end of 1989.

At a briefing for US reporters, Mr Robert Pelletreau, the American Ambassador, who led the small US diplomatic team, stressed that Mr Bush was instrumental in the internal politicking which led to this week's about-face by the Reagan Administration.

Mr Pelletreau said the new Middle East forum should proceed "at a deliberate pace", meaning that it should meet at regular, specified intervals.

The speed with which the Reagan Administration abandoned its previous shunning of the PLO has led to confusion among US officials about how exactly the new talks should progress.

They are not seen to have any exact diplomatic parallel elsewhere, and no one has been able to define what kind of "red line" any renewed Palestinian terrorism would have to cross before they are abandoned.

Mr Pelletreau made clear that the halting of terrorism was at the top of yesterday's agenda.

"I now expect the renunciation of terrorism by the PLO to be permanent and pervasive," he told reporters.

Also on the agenda at the opening session of the new dialogue, so deeply distrusted by hardline politicians in Is-

rael, was the American view of the Middle East peace process and a discussion of the modalities of how the new PLO-US dialogue will work in practice.

In a front-page report on the resumption of the contacts, Le Renouveau, the newspaper of Tunisia's ruling party, said that, to make Tuesday's opening contact with a senior PLO man in Tunis, Mr Pelletreau had been forced to get his telephone number from his British counterpart, Mr Stephen Day.

British diplomats throughout the Middle East have made no secret of their belief that pressure from London was instrumental in persuading the US to change its approach to the PLO.

Although the US envoy denied yesterday that Tunis had suddenly emerged as a central point in the peace process, his denial was treated as hollow by Arab diplomats.

"There is no cause for any wild optimism now that the two sides are talking in earnest," said one Western observer. "But when you deal daily with the potential for future violence which is present in the Middle East, any new avenue for increasing understanding and for active diplomacy is very welcome."

JERUSALEM: After a day of joy celebrating the promise of talks between the PLO and the US Palestinians in the West Bank were in mourning again yesterday for three more people killed in a particularly

violent clash with Israeli soldiers during a funeral in Nablus (Jan Murray writes).

Meanwhile, in Petah Tikvah, near Tel Aviv, the funeral went ahead of Mr Arturo Herstog, a reserve Israeli soldier aged 40, who was shot by an Arab on Tuesday.

The funeral showed that whatever diplomatic moves are going on, the basic conflict between Jews and Arabs remains as murderous as ever.

The trouble in Nablus started at the funeral of Ashraf Haj Daoud, aged 15, who died early yesterday morning, from gunshot wounds he received during a clash with soldiers three weeks ago.

The angry procession scolding his body began hurling abuse at troops patrolling the streets of the city and the violence inevitably began. The soldiers open fired with their new, hard, plastic bullets which, unlike live ammunition, do not have to be fired at the legs.

Two of the demonstrators fell dead - Yassin Shakhsir, aged 18, who was hit in the neck, and Fayed Shako, aged 20, who was hit in the heart. Later, Iyad Abutilal, aged 20, died in hospital from wounds in the mouth and chest.

The Army confirmed that nine others were wounded, including the brother of the dead boy aged 15. Three were in very serious condition and Palestinian reports said that 30 others had been wounded but had not gone to hospital.

Anniversary shows Afrikaner split

From Gavin Bell Pretoria



Supporters of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, with their swastika-like flag, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek at the Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria, yesterday.

Deep divisions in Afrikaner society over moves to dismantle apartheid were thrown into sharp focus yesterday by a government appeal for racial coexistence, and right-wing claims to a "God-given" right to white supremacy.

The conflicting sentiments were the main themes of speeches on the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek, the most holy day in the Afrikaner calendar.

President Botha, addressing an official ceremony, called for national unity to resist foreign interference and condemnation. South Africa was searching for ways to achieve "orderly coexistence and good neighbourliness, which will eliminate domination among the peoples, who in their diversity share this country."

The President's speech was politely applauded by more than 5,000 Afrikaners at a monument near Pretoria. But a larger crowd had assembled at a farm about 20 miles away to hear Dr Andries Treurnicht, leader of the far right Conservative Party, reassure diehard Afrikaners that racial segregation was enshrined in the Bible.

Dr Treurnicht, whose party has the support of more than half of white Afrikaners, added: "We won't be sacrificed on the altar by big international powers. We are a nation with a God-given land."

Lead cheers greeted the equally forceful speech of Mr Eugene Terre Blanche, leader of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement. "The Afrikaner cannot afford to let what is his taken away," he said.

WORLD ROUNDUP

Karachi curfew as riots spread

Karachi - An indefinite curfew has been imposed in several districts of Karachi after six people were shot dead and 11 seriously injured by masked gunmen in Landi Kotah colony in central Karachi (Zahid Hussain writes).

The shooting led to widespread rioting in several districts. According to an official statement, the unidentified gunmen in a car fired indiscriminately at people sitting in a roadside cafe. Troops moved immediately to the affected areas.

It was the first riot in the city since Miss Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party came to power. Miss Bhutto, the Prime Minister, ordered the Sind Government to take stern action against the killers. She said a democratic government could not be daunted by "such cowardly acts of violence".

Mr Altaf Hussain, head of the Mohajir Qoumi Movement, which forms a coalition government with the People's Party in Sind province, said the gunmen's aim was to destabilize the democratically elected Government.

Vanuatu in crisis

Port Vila (Reuter) - The South Pacific island chain of Vanuatu plunged into crisis yesterday after Father Walter Lini, the Prime Minister, ignored an order from President Sokomanu to dissolve Parliament and hold elections. "The President has no legal power to dissolve Parliament. He can take such action only if the Council of Ministers advises him to do so," Father Lini told Parliament.

Tourist shot An Australian teenage tourist was shot by a soldier on Thursday night and is recovering in hospital.

Palme case remand

Stockholm - In a heavily guarded Stockholm courtroom, Carl Gustaf Christer Pettersson, aged 41 and unemployed, was yesterday remanded in custody until December 31 charged with the murder nearly three years ago of the Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme (Christopher Mosey writes). He pleaded not guilty. The chief public prosecutor, Mr Anders Hellin, asked for the remand on the grounds that if freed, Pettersson could leave the country or destroy evidence connected with the investigation.

Dingo case claim

Sydney - Lindy Chamberlain, the mother sentenced to life imprisonment in the dingo baby case, yesterday filed a claim for \$4.4 million (£1.8 million) compensation from the Northern Territory Government for wrongful conviction and suffering (Christopher Morris writes).

She and her husband Michael were exonerated of involvement in baby Azaria's death by a Royal Commission, and in September their convictions were struck from the record after an eight-year legal battle. The claim will be considered by the Northern Territory Cabinet, which can approve an ex gratia payment.

Reagan looks back

Washington - President Reagan in a farewell speech summing up his foreign policy achievements yesterday spoke of progress in Soviet-US relations but urged caution (Mohsin Ali writes).

In an address to the University of Virginia, the President recalled that he had suggested in 1982 that if the West maintained its strength "we would see economic needs clash with the political order in the Soviet Union" and that this had happened. But he warned it could not have happened if the West had not maintained its commitment to freedom.

Abortions top births in Russia

From Mary Dejevsky Moscow

The abortion rate in the Soviet Union is higher than in any other developed country. There are nearly 20 per cent more abortions every year than there are live births - 6,800,000 against 5,600,000.

Each year 25,000 girls under the age of 17 have an abortion. Across the country, there are 600 deaths annually as a result of abortions - many of them illegal.

These statistics are not the product of any Western organization that might have an interest in blackening the reputation of Soviet society or the Soviet health service. They were published yesterday in Pravda, in an interview given by the director of the Soviet Union's national research centre for mother and child health, Professor Vladimir Kulakov.

He gave the main reason for the high figures as the difficulty of obtaining contraceptives and the lack of any Soviet-produced ones.

Armenia relief gives way to demolition

From Bill Keller, Leninakan

Fatigued and increasingly despairing of finding survivors, hundreds of foreign rescue workers have begun withdrawing from north-west Armenia's earthquake zone to make way for Soviet demolition teams.

M Pierre Schaeffer, head of a 495-member French rescue contingent based in Leninakan, said that all foreign workers have been asked to leave here by the weekend, so that bulldozers can begin levelling the surrealistic horror that was once Armenia's second biggest city.

M Schaeffer added that his rescue team believed the earthquake death toll was probably three times the 55,000 estimated by Soviet officials.

Although trucks with loudspeakers have been imploring residents to leave, hordes of sooty, listless survivors remain in central Leninakan, engaged in a hellish scavenger hunt for relatives, belongings, mementoes, or booty.

Soviet newspapers said 150 people had been arrested for looting, including one man in Kirovakan caught stealing

jewellery and watches from corpses, and others found plundering emergency supplies.

Those who remain, huddled in the dangerously unstable ruins or sleeping around campfires in the rubble, are expected to be forcibly evacuated in a matter of days.

Doctors at a Leninakan

hospital said that many survivors were severely traumatized. In one of the hospital's partly evacuated wards, a 46-year-old man who had lost his entire family took a knife and stabbed himself to death.

Miss Karen Vanyan, an Armenian official helping to plan the city's future, said it would be "three days' maximum" before the search is called off. She said the authorities have still not decided whether to evacuate completely the city, where 290,000 people once lived.

But the French rescue leader said he was told demolition is to begin on Monday, with all residents cleared from the city, except for men who will take

part in the destruction of irreparable buildings.

Although the Soviet press has sharply criticized Soviet inefficiencies, foreign rescuers said that the overall disorganization was no worse than normally expected in large-scale disasters.

"I think they've done as much as they can do under the circumstances," Mr Bruce Barton, a rescue coordinator from the US State Department's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, said. "The co-operation has been terrific, not what I expected. You come here with the traditional American stereotypes, but the military and everyone else has been extremely co-operative."

(New York Times) SPTAK: Relief workers distributed food and warm clothing to survivors here yesterday while Soviet officials, fearing an outbreak of infectious diseases, proceeded with evacuation plans (AP reports). Mr Nouraddin Norik Krikorian, the First Secretary of Sptiak's Communist Party, said work on razing the city would begin tomorrow.

Such people, Pravda said, were completely immune from the local police and judiciary. Even some party workers supported the Karabakh Committee. With an ominous rhetorical flourish, it asked: "Is it not time to deal with them?"

When those attempts failed, it said, they changed their tactics and started spreading false rumours to impede the rescue work.

They predicted that another earthquake was imminent, and then spread reports that Leninakan had been destroyed by an atomic bomb. Then, Pravda said, they staged last weekend's demonstrations in Yerevan where one of the Karabakh Committee members had challenged the troops: "We will force you to fire on us."

In a comment which betrayed the depth of the problem, Pravda said: "The Karabakh Committee had become virtually synonymous with patriotism." The committee, it went on, was in collusion with the "godfathers of the Armenian Mafia", who were creaming off profits from the relief operation for themselves.

Rumours worry Kremlin

From Mary Dejevsky Moscow

As the search for survivors from last week's earthquake in Armenia is scaled down, official statements suggest that Armenian nationalist sentiment is becoming a source of acute friction between Soviet rescue teams and local people.

Pravda yesterday accused the Karabakh Committee, which was set up last year to agitate for the transfer to Armenia of Nagorno-Karabakh, of trying to mount an alternative relief operation in competition with the Politburo commission on the disaster.

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High cost of politics in Japan

MP spotlights the lure of shady stock transactions

From Joe Joseph Tokyo

Mr Michio Watanabe, a power among Japan's ruling Liberal Democrats and, some say, a Prime Minister in waiting, yesterday took the frank picture yet by a Member of Parliament how the cost of politics in Japan might tempt MPs into the sort of dubious share deals that last week cost Japan's Finance Minister his job.

Japanese constituents expect to be coddled. Those who do not, do not vote, says Mr Watanabe. Like everything else in Japan, this costs plenty of money.

"Since stock prices have been on the rise almost constantly over the past few years," he told reporters yesterday at the Foreign Correspondents' Club in Tokyo, "I am sure there are some among them (politicians) who have engaged in financial engineering."

In the middle of Japan's worst postwar stock market scandal - which elsewhere might have brought

down a government - Mr Watanabe has thrown a rare beam of light on the blurred division between politics and business here.

Japan's political terms of trade were less interesting, and less important, to the rest of the world when Japan was not being pressed to add its voice to international decision-making. Japan is now realizing that its views will be weighed more warily if foreigners fear that its politicians can be bought. It does not help that nine of Japan's postwar Prime Ministers have at some time been officially investigated for alleged corruption.

Mr Watanabe heads the LDP's influential policy research council. He is known for being blunt in a country that prefers its politicians to lie gracefully. Often his bluntness gets him in to trouble.

His aide bought unlisted shares in Recruit Cosmos, the property company at the heart of Japan's current stock scandal. Recruit allegedly tried to curry favour by banding out shares at bargain prices to senior

MPs, civil servants and businessmen.

Mr Watanabe's aide, along with those of several present and former Cabinet ministers, made a killing when Recruit's shares were floated on the stock market. Most MPs have hidden behind this fig leaf, even though it is common knowledge that aides do these things on their boss's behalf. The lure is great: stock market gains are free of tax in Japan and share deals can be executed in someone else's name.

Mr Kiichi Miyazawa had to quit as Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister a week ago when he could not explain why his name, not his aide's, appeared on the stock papers. Mr Watanabe said yesterday that he had no plans to follow Mr Miyazawa. Nor did he excuse himself. He put the blame instead on how Japanese people expect their politicians to indulge them. Such treatment has remained expensive even though tighter rules on political donations introduced after the 1976 Lockheed bribes scandal -

which cost the then Prime Minister his job - made money harder to find.

Booming share prices in the world's biggest and healthiest stock market are an easy answer. While MPs get state support for two aides, MPs often employ 10 or 15. Many have as many as 20, earning average salaries of £23,000 a year. The £3,500 a year provided by the state for transport and communication costs, said Mr Watanabe, is laughable.

Attending a constituent's funeral might cost £200, taking into account the cash gift and flowers expected from those who come to pay respects, "and there seems to be a funeral every day", he said. Weddings cost as much and are more frequent. In short, an MP's after-tax salary and expense allowances total about £50,000; his outgoings, at least 10 times as much.

"You may ask why one has to attend all these funerals and weddings. I can assure you that if you don't you will not get re-elected next

time. There are also donations that have to be given to temples, to shrines, to festivals we have here in Japan. There are donations that have to be given to all kinds of things in Japan," said Mr Watanabe.

"So it is difficult to say which is the chicken and which is the egg, whether the politicians are to blame for spending all the money, or the constituents who make it necessary for them to spend all this money.

"Since the Lockheed scandal there has been a ceiling of 1.5 million yen (£6,800) on political contributions by any one person or organization. So what you do, if you are an MP, is you find a loophole or a way round the restrictions by creating more and more organizations around you that can accept funds."

Mr Watanabe's sketch was delivered within hours of a report showing that 12 of the 20 members of Japan's Cabinet hold unlisted stock.

Mr Noboru Takeshita, the Prime Minister, led the ranks, with a stake in nine unlisted companies.

Lanka 'is worst c... indepen... Bedshee... Italian ral...



Jayewardene talks to The Times

Sri Lanka 'is facing its worst crisis since independence'

From Edward Gorman, Colombo

In the tranquillity of his private study, surrounded by mementos and photographs which record 11 increasingly turbulent years in power, President Jayewardene admitted that he is about to leave office amid the worst crisis Sri Lanka has faced since independence.

"Of course I am disappointed," he said. "I wouldn't be human if I wasn't." The embattled President, aged 63, was speaking to The Times in his last interview before handing over to his successor on Monday after the bloodiest presidential campaign in the country's history.

As he spoke that campaign was reaching its climax with the main presidential hopefuls, Mr Ranasinghe Premadasa, the Prime Minister, and Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, the opposition leader, addressing their last rallies on the final day of campaigning.

The assassinations, too, were continuing with the toll in various incidents on the island standing at 18 by mid-afternoon. The underground Sinhalese extremist People's Liberation Front (JVP), which has brought President Jayewardene's Government to its knees over the past two months, was also making its final preparations for the elections. Leaflets were being distributed declaring that the island would be under "curfew" on Monday and those who violated the curfew would face execution.

President Jayewardene made it clear that his failure to combat the JVP insurgency could not be sustained by his successor. "Whoever is President must tackle completely this question of violence. Nothing can be done until then. All efforts, all resources should be directed to that end," he said.

He gave a warning that the country would face a dictatorship in what he considered to be the highly unlikely event of the JVP coming to power in Colombo. Comparing the underground movement's leader, Mr Rohana Wijeweera, to Pol Pot, the former Cambodian leader, he said: "He

(Mr Wijeweera) hasn't got the talent or the support. He may have the talent for revolution but not to run a government. I am sure he will not succeed."

In a remarkably frank exchange, the President admitted that his Government, which has ruled through emergency law for five and a half years, had presided over what he described as a "very regrettable" assault on human rights, first in its battle against the Tamil insurgency in the

Colombo - Twenty-one people were injured last night when at least two bombs were thrown at a final presidential election rally of 3,000 people held by Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, the main opposition candidate (Edward Gorman writes). Police said two other bombs were found at the rally, at Ratmalana, south of Colombo.

In another incident, also south of the capital, an armed clash between ruling United National Party supporters and members of Mrs Bandaranaike's Sri Lankan Freedom Party left eight people injured, police reported.

north and east and, more recently, against the JVP.

He said although the armed forces were under "perfect control", they had been "allowed to do various things which are against human rights. This is very regrettable but it cannot be helped," he said.

"Either we have to give in, hold up our arms and say: 'Come and run the country' or we have to run it."

The Sri Lankan President did not rule out Government connections with paramilitary groups like the Peoples Revolutionary Red Army which has been carrying out scores of brutal revenge killings against suspected JVP activists in the south in recent weeks.

"There are several groups, there is killing on all sides," he said. "We have been arming a large number of people for security purposes to protect Members of Parliament and the so-called United Socialist Alliance (a faction led by a

presidential candidate, Mr Ossi Abeygoonasekera). Weapons are available and they are being used for self protection."

Asked about connections between his Government and the Peoples Revolutionary Red Army, he said: "There may be something - I don't know. It may not be a connection but there may be members who are supporting the Government who are in these groups."

The President said, despite rumours of a last-minute postponement, he was confident both that the elections would go ahead on Monday and that his nominee, Mr Premadasa, would win. The elections, however, would not be peaceful. "There will be violence," he said. "There will be intimidation. They (the JVP) are trying to stop it. Democracy will be hindered - it will be in danger - but the elections will be held."

The President said he had no regrets on his handling of the JVP and traced the beginning of the present crisis to the emergence of the Tamil separatist insurgency in 1983. Violence in the north and east, he said, had given ideas to those in the south who had profited from the availability of weapons and a distracted army and police force.

His hopes that the JVP had entered the political mainstream with Mr Wijeweera's participation in the 1982 presidential elections had begun to fade by 1983. But he said he did not regret his order to ban the movement after blaming them for communal riots in Colombo that year and described as "nonsense" the generally accepted view that those riots had been organized by members of his own United National Party.

Commenting on both the main presidential candidates' apparent commitment to sending Indian troops of the peacekeeping force in the north and east back home, President Jayewardene said: "I am not concerned. They are to judge for themselves if they can give adequate security for the north and east - if they can, all well and good."

Soul singer's car chase ends in US prison



James Brown, the American soul singer, smiling as he was taken yesterday from Aiken County Courthouse, South Carolina, to jail by a prison official after receiving a six-year sentence.

the low point in Brown's troubled relations with the law over the past two years.

He was also sentenced on two counts of aggravated assault for the same incident, receiving the option of six months in jail or a \$6,000 (£3,278) fine and five years' probation.

The chase began in Augusta, Georgia, after Brown entered an insurance seminar in the building where he has an office brandishing a pistol and a shotgun. He demanded to know who had been using "his restroom". He

ordered two women to lock the toilet door and give him the key.

Brown left in a pick-up truck, but Georgia police gave chase, pursuing him at speeds of up to 85mph along the highway until he crossed into neighbouring South Carolina.

A policeman then shot out his tyres, but Brown continued driving on his wheels rim for another eight miles, crossing back into Georgia.

Brown had run foul of the law several times in the months leading up to the chase, and just two days after it

he was arrested again, while on bail, for driving without a licence. Earlier this year, he pleaded guilty to resisting arrest and possession of an illegal firearm after another car chase.

He was also charged with assault with intent to kill after his wife, a former soap opera actress, Adrienne Brown, told police he fired several shots at her car and beat her with a pipe. The charges were dropped after she refused to testify.

Brown also had a string of traffic-related arrests last year.

Unions march through Madrid

From Harry Debelius, Madrid

Trade unions marched against Government policies in Madrid yesterday after effectively rejecting a proposal by Prime Felipe Gonzalez, the Prime Minister, for a joint meeting with representatives of the Spanish Confederation of Management Organizations.

In separate letters to Senor Gonzalez, the heads of Spain's two biggest unions, the Socialist-orientated General Labour Union and the Communist-led Workers' Commissions, said they would not attend if the president of the federation was present, and laid down other "unrenounceable prior conditions" for the proposed meeting next Thursday.

They said they did not intend to discuss "the accounts of the realm", that is,

the economy in general, but would talk about youth pensions, unemployment and civil servants' union rights.

A scheduled Cabinet meeting presided over by Senor Gonzalez was yesterday assessing the importance of the 24-hour general strike which paralyzed the country last Wednesday, reflecting union demands for a swing to the left in economic and employment policies.

The two unions, joined by the anarchist National Labour Confederation, organized yesterday evening's march in Madrid to keep driving home their demands to the Government.

Symptomatic of the bitter split in the socialist family which has pitted the General

Labour Union against a socialist Government in the first general strike in more than 50 years was an incident on Thursday night, when Senor Miguel Boyer, the former socialist Finance Minister who has accepted the presidency of a private bank, was addressing a businessmen.

A union militant strode up to him, shouted "Traitor! You're a traitor to the union, a thief and a pickpocket", then slapped him. After the man was hustled out, Senor Boyer carried on, saying: "A socialist turn in the Government's economic policy, as proposed by the unions, would result in increased inflation, more unemployment and decreased investment."

In their letters to the Prime

Plane crash kills 10 in outback

Sydney - A charter flight taking miners to the gold town of Kalgoorlie in Western Australia ended in disaster yesterday when the plane crashed in the remote outback killing 10 on board (Christopher Morris writes).

The aircraft, a twin-engine Mitsubishi MU2, went down after flying into a thunderstorm shortly after take-off from an airstrip at the Bellview gold mine for the 180-mile flight to Kalgoorlie.

High growth

Lisbon (Reuters) - The Portuguese Parliament gave final approval to the centre-right Government's 1989 budget, which forecasts further high growth rates for West Europe's poorest economy.

Pay protest

Seoul (AFP) - South Korea's ruling and opposition party assembly leaders agreed to scrap a decision to raise MPs' salary by 85 per cent following an outcry from the press and voters.

Border killing

Peking (Reuters) - China said that two Vietnamese soldiers who intruded on its territory had been shot dead, and accused Vietnam of repeated cross-border attacks in recent months.

Eastern tour

Moscow (AFP) - The Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr Eduard Shevardnadze sets off tomorrow on a major Asian tour taking in Japan, the Philippines and North Korea.

Teacher's find

Fort Worth (Reuters) - The fossilized remains of three dinosaurs which represent a newly-discovered species have been found near Fort Worth by a high school biology teacher and his son, aged seven.

Fatal demand

Colombo (AFP) - A widow killed seven of her children and committed suicide in northern Sri Lanka after she was harassed for money by two sons-in-law.

'Golden Bedsheet' fraud spawns more Italian railway scandals

From Roger Boyes, Rome

The Italian Government, in a well-meaning but plainly doomed attempt to make the trains run on time before 1992, is using an exorbitantly named Golden Bedsheets scandal to purge the railway establishment.

Four out of 12 directors of the Italian state railways are under arrest, and the search for evidence is spawning yet more scandals, including one concerning the diversion of earthquake relief funds.

The Golden Bedsheets are, in fact, made of paper. Earlier this year a 600 million contract was awarded to a Salerno businessman, Signor Elio Graziano, for the supply of paper bedsheets to equip Italian sleeping cars.

Although expensive, the idea was to cut down the railway service's huge laundry bill. Some 50,000 brand new pure wool blankets were sold off cheaply in anticipation of the new space age paper sheets.

But rival businessmen denounced the deal to the police: it was never submitted to tender, the sheets were suspiciously over-priced and,

according to one account, likely to go up in flames. When the police raided Signor Graziano's flat, office and four factories they found checklists of railway directors with numbers attached to each name - pay-offs, according to the investigating magistrate.

Signor Graziano disappeared from the scene in his private helicopter and fled to America from where he has protested his innocence.

In their search, police investigators also found false financial returns which suggested that Signor Graziano had put in claims for millions of lire in compensation for largely imaginary damages suffered during the earthquake that struck the Naples region in 1980.

The fate of tens of millions of pounds of earthquake relief is an abiding mystery. It is widely assumed that some ended up in the pockets of the Camorra, the Neapolitan mafia. The Italian Prime Minister, Ciriaco De

Stella, has his power base in Avellino within the former earthquake region. Signor Graziano was chairman of

Avellino football club at the same time.

Could some mud stick to the Prime Minister? The Communist Party opposition is trying its best and the press now refers to Signor De Mita's *Irrpiniate* after Irpinia, the actual site of the earthquake.

Signor Mario Schimberni, aged 65, has been put in charge of the railways until a new board of directors can be found. The former head of the chemicals giant, Montedison, is being trusted with a thorough purge of this most political of public services.

The railway reform of 1986 gave the Italian railways some autonomy from the Transport Ministry. But the new independence did not add up to much: the Railway Board was divided up politically. Merit does not seem to have entered the equation.

Real control of the railways remained at platform level, the trains controlled in the minutest detail by the trades unions with their respective party loyalties. Every train has to have two drivers in the same cabin, every station is divided up according to the

political and union rules. The result appears to be corruption at the top and chaos at the bottom. Strikes bedevil the railways. According to the latest statistics 59 per cent of all trains have delays of more than five minutes, almost 10 per cent delays of an hour.

The state of the railways was always an index of Italy's modernity. Mussolini claimed his renewal of rolling stock and railway track as a sign of how Fascism was benefiting the people. Today, people prefer to use his *autostadas*.

Arctic health threat grows

Vancouver (Reuters) - Canada says it fears airborne pollution from the industrialized world could be hurting the health of 22,000 Eskimos living in the country's remote Arctic region.

Dr David Kinloch, the chief medical health officer for the Northwest Territories, said contaminants such as polychlorinated biphenyls and pesticides like DDT have been found.

His colleagues said they had been followed and surrounded by eight heavily-armed Arena vigilantes. Among them they recognized the Mayor of Soya-pango, Senor Antonio Vasquez Corena, and the head of the municipal police.

"The men started to beat me shouting: 'He's the leader', said Senor Rubino Landaverde, the co-ordinator of the Christian Democrat canvassers. "They tried to force me and two others into their vehicle saying they were going

El Salvador elections

Death squads on poll trail

From Tom Gibb, San Salvador

to take us away." Bonilla was shot at point-blank range as he came to help his friends.

The Christian Democrats say there have been repeated threats from local Arena officials against their party workers. "The killing clearly demonstrates that Arena intends to increase violence," said Dr Fidel Chavez Mena, the Christian Democrat presidential candidate.

They also accused Arena of employing as security guards former members of right-wing death squads which, together with the military, are alleged to have killed tens of thousands of civilians in the early years of the civil war. The accusation was backed up earlier this year by two former Arena guards and death squad members who told their story publicly.

In a communique issued after this latest killing Arena party officials said they had ordered an exhaustive investigation into the Soya-pango case. But the communique added that they had found nothing to suggest that Mayor Corena was involved. It accused the Chris-

tian Democrats of "politicizing" the case.

Arena controls over 200 of the country's 262 municipalities after a landslide victory in legislative and municipal elections last March. Since then eight mayors, most from Arena, have been assassinated by left-wing guerrillas. The rebels have also been carrying out bombings and other attacks in the cities.

Many fear the country is slipping towards the uncontrolled bloodshed of the early 1980s, when at least 9,000 people died each year. Every week several mutilated bodies are found dumped around the capital, apparently the victims of right-wing or military death squads.

The founder of Arena, Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, accused the international press of bias for not covering attacks on Arena officials. He said the mayor's office in Soya-pango had been bombed three times and his house had been machine-gunned.

The election campaign has also produced accusations of fraud between the two main parties.

Sex change operation raises Egyptian storm

Plight of 'Sally' challenges Islamic theory

From Our Own Correspondent, Cairo

Egypt's doctors are demanding an urgent new law governing sex change operations following the controversy resulting from the country's first such publicized operation in which a male medical student, aged 24, became Miss Sally Muhammad Abdullah.

Sally's plight has become a cause celebre which has exposed a new area of conflict between the teachings of Islam and modern science.

It has also cast a shadow over the 2,500 males and 500 females in Egypt estimated by Dr Ahmed Okasha, a leading psychiatrist, to be in need of such operations for psychological reasons. In an effort to resolve a situation which has caused great uncertainty in a society which has long avoided public discussion of sexual issues, the Doctors' Union has demanded a law which would require all such future operations to be referred to a special committee.

Since Sally became a woman earlier this year, she has faced a series of

problems which left her in despair. Dressed in flowered trousers and a blue sweater, she told reporters: "My life has come to a complete standstill. I have been deprived of all my rights as a human being. If this goes on, I will have to leave the country."

She was expelled from her medical school run by Al-Azhar, Cairo's Islamic Institute, and later ordered by the Army to perform military service, which is compulsory for men, but not for women.

Dr Ezzat Gibrail, whom she first consulted seven years ago when she could not cope with her growing female tendencies and who eventually agreed to perform the sex change, was barred from practising by the Doctors' Union, which said he had performed the operation without cause.

"This operation was a flagrant violation of religious values, of traditions accepted by the Egyptian and Islamic society and the profession's medical ethics," the union's deputy chairman, Dr Saleem Negm, said.

As the debate gathered momentum, religious scholars argued that medical

practices in Egypt should conform with Islamic principles. "Such operations should not merely be performed because one person desires it. There must be clear physical justifications to do so," stated an official ruling.

It provoked deep divisions among Egypt's doctors and psychiatrists similar to those aroused over other subjects on which Egypt's traditionally tolerant society has in recent years become increasingly responsive to the strictures of Islamic law.

An unidentified surgeon who wrote to the union protesting at the operation claimed that cutting off male genitals and making an artificial vagina did not make Sally a woman.

Other critics argued that Islamic teaching only permitted such surgery if a person had hidden male or female organs which could not be revealed without it. "If Sally had been born with the organs of both sexes, the operation would have been acceptable," Dr Negm said.

Dr Gibrail, a surgeon with 21 years experience, argued that Sally had been physically male but psychologically

female and could not help behaving like a woman as she was born with a female-orientated brain. "Those people who attack me have not seen the torture people like Sally go through," he said. "She was ill. She hated her gender. She could have committed suicide. It was my duty as a doctor to help."

The doctor, who claimed that many similar operations in Egypt had been hushed up, said that no laws banned the operation, which was described in medical text books available at Egyptian universities. He also announced plans to take legal action challenging the union's withdrawal of his licence.

Sally, whose case is known by word of mouth to most ordinary Egyptians, has baffled the country's formidable army of bureaucrats. She has not been permitted to change the sex on her birth certificate until a government committee rules officially that she is now a woman and not a man.

She has also been unable to enter another college to complete her medical degree because officials do not recognize her as female.

Gulf peace talks postponed

By Nicholas Beeston

Talks to secure peace in the Gulf War were postponed indefinitely yesterday, with diplomats warning that "years" of tortuous negotiations lay ahead to avert a resumption of hostilities.

Nearly four months after the two sides agreed to a ceasefire, Baghdad and Tehran cannot even agree to meet, let alone tackle the issue of their disputed border demarcations, which led to the start of the war in 1980.

"Unfortunately, we can still not report progress on the major issues," the United Nations mediator, Mr Jan Eliasson, said in Geneva yesterday after holding fringe talks with the two sides.

One UN source added: "We are definitely in a difficult position now. I would not put my money on an early resumption of the Geneva talks. They will not resume in January." Once optimistic that the bloody and costly conflict was finally over,

Western diplomats are now expressing concern that hostilities could restart in the long term unless a stable peace is reached.

"I don't think hostilities will start again while the negotia-

Paris (AFP) - A wave of secret executions has virtually emptied Iranian jails of political prisoners, according to reports from relatives. Tehran has denied reports of mass executions which Amnesty International had described as the biggest wave of secret political killings in Iran since early this decade. But testimonies from relatives carried to France by Iranian travellers support the reports.

One UN source added: "We are definitely in a difficult position now. I would not put my money on an early resumption of the Geneva talks. They will not resume in January." Once optimistic that the bloody and costly conflict was finally over,

Senior Javier Perez de Cuellar, is attempting to impose Security Council Resolution 598, the 10-point blueprint for peace in the Gulf War. Both sides have accepted the resolution in theory.

In practice, however, both Baghdad and Tehran have selected different elements of the peace plan they find most attractive and have stubbornly refused to compromise. The main obstacle is Iraq's claim to the whole of the Shatt al-Arab waterway, its only outlet to the sea. Iraq insists on recognition of the 1975 Algiers agreement which divides the disputed waterway down the middle.

Iraqi troops are still holding pockets of Iranian territory, but are not expected to withdraw while Baghdad has other outstanding demands.

One such demand is that the Shatt al-Arab waterway be dredged and its shipping allowed to sail through the Gulf unmolested by Iran.



# TIMES DIARY

SIMON BARNES

Here, surely, is the finest sports story of all time: the golfer who, with one stroke, destroyed a nation's entire air force. Methuen Boya of the West African state of Benin was practising his golf during his factory lunch break on ground hard by an airstrip. He unleashed a drive that was not one of his best. Instead of going straight, it careered off, and struck the windscreen of a jet that was about to take off. The pilot lost control and ploughed into a line of four fighters, destroying them all.

The Benin government was inclined to hold Boya responsible for the £44 million of damage. Since he only earns £425 a year, it would clearly take him a while to pay. There was also talk of charging him with "hooliganism", which would have meant a possible six-month sentence. But in the end he was let off with a £45 fine and a seven-day suspended sentence. Benin, however, is now without an air force. I am indebted to the January issue of *Golf Monthly* for this little gem.

With only a week to go before football's match of the season, Westfield v Chobham in the Danair Combined Counties League, I have to report that both teams are coming into form at the right time. Well, Chobham haven't actually got a point yet. The worst run in their 83-year history continues. But things are looking up — they only lost 1-0 to Farleigh Rovers last week, and felt they were unlucky not to win.

This follows a change of manager. The last incumbent, Nick Clark, was, says the secretary, Daisy Whalley, candidly, appointed only "because we couldn't get anyone else". The new man, John Lewis, announced his presence with a Crisis Meeting. The club has used 40 players this season, and has 90 registered, but the previous week only five turned up for training. Mrs Whalley said: "I just hope we can get together our best team for Christmas Eve."

But since this column turned its eye on Chobham's great rivals, Westfield, they have gone from strength to strength. Last Saturday they scored their second point of the season when they drew with Ash United, and on Tuesday they travelled to Horley Town where they won by an incredible 4-2.

As English cricket flounders in the mire of ineptitude and waits for the Coming of Hick, India produces a new prodigy, the youngest player ever to score a century in the Ranji Trophy, the country's number one competition. He is Sachin Tendulkar, who is 15 years and seven months, and he scored his ton on his recent debut for Bombay against Gujarat. He was unbeaten, and did the business off 129 balls in 186 minutes, and hit 12 fours off the process.

I do not think, however, that I can claim him as the youngest ever scorer of a first-class hundred, though records are surprisingly elusive on this point. There have been other prodigies, notably Mushtaq Mohamed, who made his first-class debut at 13 years and 41 days. He played for Karachi Whites, and though failing to get a ton, he hit a creditable 87 and then took 3 for 28. Mushtaq made his Test debut at 15 years and 124 days and had two Test centuries before he was 19.

## BARRY FANTONI



'First it was eggs, now their corn and old chestnuts...'

This week I received a sad letter from Paradise, California from a cricket enthusiast improbably based at that improbable address. Jim Horne was delighted when a business trip gave him two days in London since, he thought, he could make a pilgrimage to Lord's. He reached the Grace Gates, and was told that the only chance he had to see inside was on a Friday afternoon tour. It was Tuesday. "Disappointed," I inquired if I might so much as walk 100 feet and ascend the dozen steps for a once-in-a-lifetime glimpse through the shackled gates. "Certainly not," I was advised by the guard. "It's hard to get into Lord's when you have every right to be there — even if you are actually playing, as my old friend Phil Edmunds will tell you."

The all-party Parliamentary Greyhound Club met for the first time at Wimbledon Stadium on Tuesday. It includes three lords and a government whip among its 20 members and owns two dogs, the resonantly named Horn Member and Division Belle. There is a bit of politics among the pleasures, of course: greyhound racing is lobbying for the right to set up a greyhound racing levy board. After all, if horses get a rake-off from betting, why not dogs? Fair's fair. I wish I could report that Tuesday gave our legislators something to celebrate. In fact both dogs were well and truly beaten.

Police visited the Crystal Palace dressing-room at half-time on Tuesday during the Simod Cup match against Southampton. Someone had tipped them off that players had been heard swearing on the pitch (Footballers Use Bad Language Shock) and the players were told that if they continued to do so, they could be arrested. By one of life's little ironies, Crystal Palace have this season decorated their ground with signs saying that users of hard words will be ejected. The signs face the crowd, but could always be swivelled through 180 degrees. I once called a referee something unprintable, but while the referee was earthly Anglo-Saxon, the ref only spoke Cantonese.

Transport in London is a complex subject and deserves serious consideration. Few other topics could warrant and receive five pages of analysis in successive editions of *The Times*. Although *The Times* is to be congratulated for airing the issues in detail, I disagree with the conclusions reached by Paul Valley and your leading article of December 10.

Many have failed to see what has really happened in London in recent years. What has happened confounds every claim or prediction made six years ago when London Transport left its temporary controllers at County Hall. Reports then spread gloom and despondency. Little was said to prepare us for the massive increases in passenger numbers using the Underground, increased rail use and the fall in the number of people commuting by car which have, in fact, occurred.

We were promised station closures; instead the task now is to cope with stations too small and too few rather than too large and too many.

I believe that media coverage is the key to informed debate from which emanate the sensible proposals that will benefit us all. Accurate reporting can only help.

The average Londoner could

## Peter Bottomley replies to *The Times* series on capital congestion

# Getting London moving

read all that has been printed about the London Assessment Studies — where we have commissioned consultants to look at ways of improving transport in four key areas around London — and come away thinking both that nothing is being done and that we are only interested in building motorways through every living room in the capital.

We are looking for solutions which will improve mobility and improve conditions for residents. We have said so, in detail and repeatedly. The information afforded has not always been transmitted.

Typical of the sort of scheme we are looking for is the Rochester Way Relief Road — a GLC project started in 1981 to build a road alongside a railway to give relief to local communities. The scheme has cut "rat-running" by motorists, made movement safer for pedestrians and helped

public transport passengers by freeing bus routes from cross-London traffic and radial commuters.

Another illustration of what can happen is the Western Environmental Improvement Route (Weir), a scheme to channel road traffic away from homes. The idea was announced in 1984, demonstrated to a double-decker bus load of television crews, journalists and photographers in March 1987, and was the subject of press notices the same year when its line was safeguarded and public consultation predicted. Eighteen months later it made headlines as a "secret plan". It is small wonder that many people end up with a totally misleading impression of what is going on.

Paul Valley rightly reports the massive growth in car ownership in London — a growth which was not predicted or even imagined when much of London's housing

was being built. From some quarters one might get the impression that cars were acceptable for a well-off, white, male middle-class with a parking space at work. When the rest of us want and can afford one, it suddenly becomes fashionable to advocate pricing travel, if not ownership, out of reach.

Current calls for a new London strategic planning authority are also fashionable. The shape, size and purpose of this body are not clear. The GLC spent 11 years developing the Greater London Development Plan and scrapped the roads element five years after it was adopted. Is that to be repeated?

No. A new strategic authority is not the answer to congestion in London. Past attempts at solving the problems through master plans have failed. Such detailed comprehensive planning amounts to a recipe for doing nothing. The Department of

Transport and ministers take seriously their clear responsibility to create a coherent approach.

Grand plans depend on grand forecasts. Nowhere can I find any published forecast, prediction or extrapolation made in the past eight years which indicated the realities of today.

If each London-based newspaper had been asked 10 years ago to set down the transport needs for its supplies, its distribution, its journalists and production staff, their answers would look odd now.

We are not about to turn our backs on the successful policies that have given us eight years of economic growth. London is vibrant and does not want stifling with ineffective planning. What is wanted is continued action in tackling the varied urgent problems directly.

This is what is happening. Investment in public transport is

at record levels. Work on providing better orbital movement on trunk roads has been stepped up. Support for similar schemes on local roads has increased. New technology is being applied to traffic control systems to improve the flow of traffic. Illegal parking is being tackled vigorously.

Not in a hundred years, but in five and ten we shall see the service improvements that will come from infrastructure improvements in public transport. We shall see the road and rail links which have made possible the rebirth of Docklands. We shall see more reverse commuting too.

More of us will have cars. More London borough centres will be freed from the environmental nightmare of endless traffic as a result of locally-led schemes.

The London Assessment Studies will produce options to take forward as proposals with positive net benefits for us all — as home owners, car drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and public transport passengers.

*The author, MP for Eltham, is Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Transport.*

## Ben Pimlott

# In the forest something stirs

The most significant thing about the Epping Forest by-election is not that the Tories did badly but that nobody else did very well. A better-than-expected verdict on the Democrats must be qualified by the thought that had the Alliance still existed, it would probably have won. Labour, on the other hand, hoped to come second and failed miserably. *Plus ça change.*

A generation ago shivers were sent down socialist spines by a book called *Must Labour Lose?* Today, in the wake not only of Epping but also of the SNP victory at Govan, and on the eve of Mrs Thatcher's 10th anniversary year, the question on the left is the same, but starker: can the Tories ever be defeated?

The conventional wisdom is negative. According to Gallup, (which has just put Labour 11 points behind), four out of five voters are predicting another Tory victory in 1991 or 1992. This is mainly a product of the present political weather, but it also has a solid statistical basis. Neil Kinnock needs a pro-Labour swing twice as large as Harold Wilson obtained in 1964 even to equal the Conservatives, let alone to get an overall majority. What is more, Wilson's triumph followed three years of opinion poll supremacy, in contrast to Labour's bleak performance in the 1980s.

Yet, oddly enough, there are also some quite substantial reasons why the Government's opponents, collectively, can enter the festive season with good cheer. The Tory slump at Epping — despite a good candidate and campaign — may reflect something that has been visible in the polls for some time. The smooth graph of Tory electoral superiority since 1987 actually masks a subterranean growth of hostility towards most of what the Government is doing. The received view about Thatcherism is that it is populist — with an implication of adeptness at riding or leading public opinion. Maybe it used to be. Today, however, the Government has the rare distinction of being in public disfavour on almost every major platform in

its legislative programme. If policies were decided by referendum, there is little of the Tory whirlwind — from privatization to the poll tax — that would not be voted out.

In short, the Government is not only selling off water, but walking on it, its popularity riding held up by mysterious forces. The Prime Minister's personal standing remains high, as does her Government's reputation for competence. For the time being, these may count for more than policy. But recent MORI evidence that a summer of economic optimism among voters has turned into a winter of deep pessimism can scarcely be regarded as incidental. For the Government to continue to treat the electorate as a gigantic fan club, without significant opinions, may be as foolhardy, in the long run, as seeking to defy the laws of gravity.

There are other points to bear in mind. By mid-term, governments often do badly and oppositions frequently forge ahead. That hasn't happened this time, which is one reason why people are so dismissive of Labour's chances.

It is also usual, however, for a pre-election boom to be followed by a post-election depression, and that hasn't happened either. Instead, the 1987 election heralded a period of economic buoyancy and a tax-cutting Budget. That episode has passed and brakes have been applied, but credit has continued to be readily available and the majority of mortgage payers have yet to feel the bite of higher interest rates. As credit becomes tighter and home-owners are forced to pay up in the spring, so passive pessimism among voters about the economy could turn to active irritation with the Government's erratic handling of it.

Government popularity is one thing, opposition plausibility another. Whether such a judgement is fair is a matter of opinion. Few, however, would dispute that Labour is now performing better in Parliament than at any previous time in the decade. Youth and freshness are



gains from the fall-out. Already, the Government's lead is probably assisted by a tacit acceptance of the dictum that there is no alternative. Whether such a judgement is fair is a matter of opinion. Few, however, would dispute that Labour is now performing better in Parliament than at any previous time in the decade. Youth and freshness are

beginning to tell. In recent clashes, the Government's most imposing ministers have not exactly been on the ropes, but they have certainly been glad of the sound of the bell. Meanwhile, outside the Commons, Labour's policy review has been producing recommendations of the utmost (even perhaps excessive) sobriety.

Though the possibility of a "leap in one bound" from opposition to outright majority victory is certainly remote, the chance of a minority win is real, while for the former Alliance parties there remains the possibility of partnership with Labour in a hung parliament. In politics (as Mrs Thatcher is fond of remarking) the unexpected frequently happens.

There was no precedent for the 1974 Liberal and Nationalist usurper that turned Britain into a multi-party system. There was no precedent in 1983 for a government presiding over a return to mass unemployment and winning the subsequent election. If Labour and the other opposition parties make a rapid recovery, that too will be unprecedented, but it would scarcely be the most surprising event in voting history.

We hear the argument that the prestige of this government is so high that it receives acclaim for what it is and no longer needs support for what it does. That can be countered by the thesis that, if Toryism were an equity, any stockbroker would reckon it to be over-valued, and that Labour's current rating constitutes a market opportunity. What strengthens this view is the new possibility that Labour and some of the other opposition parties could coordinate and even start to speak on some issues with a united voice.

For Labour, the most depressing legacy of the 1981 split was the consequent social and intellectual isolation: the forced march into a ghetto of old-fashioned policies and defensive party chauvinism, which was deeply unattractive to waverers. Today, not only is there a wide-spread acceptance that a hung parliament (which would require inter-party co-operation) is a sufficiently ambitious goal, but a total reform — which would mean banishing majority governments for ever — has become a subject of keen debate across the non-Conservative spectrum.

There have been a number of related events. A sense of common cause among members of different opposition parties on many social and related issues recently helped to inspire the newsletter *Samizdat*, whose eponymous call for a "popular front of the mind" has evoked an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response. This was followed by the *New Statesman*-backed Charter 88 campaign for constitutional reform, which has also achieved a wide following. Separately conceived, both have in common an impatience with the tramline exclusivity of opposition parties and the need to broaden the battle against inadequately-checked government powers.

People who used to swap insults are now sharing platforms and discussing joint documents: left-wing socialists are to be seen lying down with Liberals, Labour stalwarts with Democrats. An electoral pact, advocated by two Labour MPs, John Reid and John Evans, is a political dead end, and there is certainly a limit to the extent of possible contact. Yet there is clearly emerging the chance of a new, broad-based, consensus of a kind that has not existed since the early 1960s — isolating this administration and giving a lie to the notion of a consensus in the Government's favour.

Large streams from little fountains flow. The revival of opposition fortunes may not be immediate, and the Conservatives will certainly not be easily beaten, despite Epping. Nevertheless, it is worth remembering that at the equivalent stage in the 1959 parliament — before Wilson's eventual victory — the Tories still held their lead. Today, the opening of lines of communication left-of-centre may help to generate a mood in which the narrow basis of official policy can be exposed. Certainly, the chance of developing a new progressive momentum may be greater than at any time for a generation.

*The author is editor of Samizdat, available from 18 Victoria Park Square, London E2 (£12 per year).*

## Commentary • GRAHAM MATHER

# Cracking the edifice

The compensation announcement for egg producers could have a long-term impact on the way Britain is governed. It is a major victory for a simple principle: that action by governments can harm individuals, and that governments should be obliged to provide redress when their negligence or recklessness causes damage.

The egg producers were prepared to go to law. The prospect of a High Court case — were Mrs Currie's remarks a negligent misstatement? what is the quantum of damages? — was it foreseeable? — gave Whitehall an understandable fright.

No government which had introduced laws to make trades unions pay the economic costs of their acts would be comfortable to find itself in such a position. So compensation for egg producers makes economic and legal sense; but it could be the beginning of a new preparedness to sue government and its agencies, across a wide front of public-sector responsibilities.

The conventional response to this prospect is to complain about the spread of American-style litigation. Lawyers grow rich, the parties are paralysed by legal costs, the law becomes an ever-present impediment to effective administrative action: so the traditional wisdom goes.

But there are many clues that Britain has suffered from insufficient resort to law — especially where government is concerned. Whatever a court may or would have decided on the egg case, it seems eminently desirable that ministers and officials should weigh the consequences of their deeds and pronouncements against a test

which puts a price on behaviour which is negligent or reckless.

A preparedness to go to law does not mean a rash of vexatious cases. The farmers' stand will give officials and ministers pause for thought across the world of public administration: its value will be as much *pour encourager les autres* as in its specific application.

And legal constraints may be virtually the only means of constraining government growth in Britain, lacking the written constitution which in the United States and elsewhere can counterbalance governmental expansion, and with few signs that Parliament itself is effective or constitutionally-minded enough to put real checks on government growth.

Government in Britain is changing its shape. Privatization has deprived it of ownership of large tracts of the economy. Yet there are many signs that it may regain, through powers of regulation of private sector activity, much or all of the influence it previously exercised directly.

Going to law is one of the best ways of curbing this growth and making it accountable. As well as controlling administrative discretion, carelessness or negligence, it may prove the only redress for those who have been damaged by government failure. Thinking socialists, such as Professor Raymond Plant, now recognize that it would be better "to think in terms of empowering citizens rather than putting such faith in bureaucratic remedies". They are directing their work to replacing the "illusory public service model" of bureaucratic motivation with real rights for citizens. To work, those rights must be legal rights. To be

effective, a proportion will need to go to court.

Take the Highbury Quadrant parents. It is arguable that the steps taken by the Inner London Education Authority were so inadequate, after receiving information about the state of education at the school, as to constitute negligence. Why should parents be discouraged from testing this through the law, and receiving compensation, if their children's prospects and careers have been damaged?

Again, it may be the case that, having equipped itself with a battery of regulatory powers, the conduct of the Department of Trade and Industry in the Barlow Clowes case *did* constitute negligence which would have foreseeable economic consequences for those who invested. It is not necessary to take a view on each case to appreciate that the only effective remedy may be to go to law; and that bureaucratic decisions about compensation levels may be affected by the knowledge that the alternative is to test the case openly in court.

There are other routes. Thanks to the judicial creativity of Lord Denning, local authorities and bodies with quasi-judicial powers are likely to be held to a general "duty to act fairly". Again, the courts have shown that they are prepared to use injunctions or declarations to enforce their own jurisdiction to review discretionary acts by government and its agencies where procedures are unfair, justice impeded or rights infringed. Going to court privatizes the governmental process because it equips individuals with real and sometimes quantifiable rights, where they would otherwise be

mere supplicants or lobbyists.

The opportunities are much wider than is often imagined. Where central or local government is negligent or reckless, or breaches a statutory duty, and economic loss is caused which is reasonably foreseeable, it makes sense for citizens to look for a legal remedy. Already the Freedom Association exists to help appropriate cases — and the US pattern suggests that a range of legal foundations will spring up to help citizens bring cases in Britain, or to take them to the European Court of Human Rights.

The strength of the common law of England is that it can adapt painlessly and immediately to new circumstances. Had the egg producers relied upon legislation to give them justice they might have waited indefinitely. No statute anticipated or provided for the consequences of the salmonella statement. But the common law tort of negligence and its fellows are constantly available to citizens damaged by government. The egg producers showed imagination in the application of *existing* legal remedies — slander of goods, malicious falsehood, and negligent misstatement — to their statement of claim.

Few enjoy going to court. But the legacy of this particular action may be important. If businesses and individuals are helped by creative lawyers, prepared to use their imagination to apply existing legal remedies, the result could be a valuable precedent: a government made more constrained and accountable by the effective enforcement of common law rights.

*The author is general director, Institute of Economic Affairs.*

## DEC 17 ON THIS DAY 1883

### CHRISTMAS CARDS

These cards of a century ago hardly reflect the popular image of an "old-fashioned Christmas".

The custom of exchanging upon ornate cards the compliments proper to Yule-tide — a custom of not quite such recent origin as is sometimes imagined — has acquired the importance and dignity of a regular institution. Christmas is now armed with greater terrors for the letter carriers than the festival of St. Valentine itself. In all parts of the country the resources of the Post Office are strained to the utmost on the 24th of December, as may be inferred from the emphasis with which Mr Pawcett annually urges the public to despatch these tokens of amity and goodwill before the eleventh hour.

Naturally enough, the artistic value of the cards has increased with their popularity, thanks in some measure to the enterprise shown by Messrs Raphael Tuck and Sons in causing a competitive exhibition of designs for articles of the kind to be held at the Dudley Gallery. Formerly as deficient in that quality as the illustrations, long dear to extreme youth, of evil-minded eels and hold buccaners, most of them have come to be marked by graceful and delicate coloring. Nor do those prepared for the present season fall below the standard reached within the last three or four years.

Inanimate nature still receives more than a due share of attention at the hands of the artists, but no falling-off in fineness of execution is to be perceived. Especially elaborate are the cards in which, with a border of fringes, issued by Messrs Tuck and Sons, Messrs Philipp Brothers, and Messrs Saunders and Co.

It is not too much to say that the maximum of richness is here secured with the minimum of goodness. Messrs Walker and Co's collection is noteworthy for other reasons; it consists of paintings by hand on ivory or ivorine, and in each case a little artistic triumph is achieved.

From Messrs Samuel and Co we have received some cards on which crosses in mother-of-pearl are surrounded with flowers, and from Mr Wallis, the representative in London of Messrs Meissner and Buch a few dainty watercolour sketches. In point of number and variety, and in point of stock is superior to that of Messrs Hildebrandt and Faulkner who are particularly fortunate in a little portfolio of etchings by Mr Whitford Couleider, and in sketches of mountain scenery.

Messrs De La Rue, like Messrs Marcus Ward and Co, Messrs Eyles and Spottiswoode, and Mr Ollendorff, rely as a rule on somewhat conventional forms, but go far to compensate us for this by the care bestowed upon the workmanship. Few things they have done are better than "Merry Chitps" — a representation in chamois-lithography, with fringed edging, of original water-colour drawings of birds rejoicing in brilliant plumage — and a few paintings on white satin. A word of praise is also due to the productions of Mr Ackermann, Mr Harding, Mr Marx and Messrs Mansell.

Messrs Dean and Son, besides some pretty cards on ivory and ivorine, have a decided novelty in the shape of a few paintings on little bevelled mirrors, and the idea is executed with charming effect. It may be mentioned too, that Messrs Wyman and Son have brought out a series of cards which in addition to being ornamented with clever drawings, have the merit of collectively enabling children to play a round game. The pack is entitled "Merry Matches", and should not be passed over at this season.





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## FARMERS' REVENGE

It used to be said that a political career was all the better for a good resignation. Mr Enoch Powell, Lords Thorneycroft, Boyle, and, most decisively, Wilson, offer some support for the adage. Mr Heseltine may still put store by it.

Even a bad resignation may not be disastrous. Mr Parkinson proves that.

Mrs Currie's resignation is, however, rather different. She does not dissent from a principle of Government policy. She is involved in no personal scandal that may at some future stage be judged forgotten.

If any precedent for her behaviour is to be sought, the nearest is perhaps that of Hugh Dalton's Budget disclosure. Dalton acted uncharacteristically. He did return to Government, but never to so high a position as the one he left. Mrs Currie acted all too characteristically. She has left a very low, albeit much publicized, position. Her future prospects cannot be considered good.

Her departure from the Government has the immediate effect of lancing a political boil. It will not help the egg producers whose business she has damaged but it will help the Government Chief Whip, whom she saw before seeing the Prime Minister yesterday. There has grown a pressing need to soothe the anger of members for rural constituencies.

Her departure — neither willingly nor with grace — will bring silent pleasure to many Tories who, while envying her public relations skills, always said that they would end in tears. The backwoods Jeremiahs have had little opportunity to say "I told you so" in recent years. Generally, the various vulgarities of which they disapproved have gone down better with the voters than in the House of Commons bars. This time they have a scalp. They should

not make too much of their triumph. It could certainly have been better had Mrs Currie apologized for the loose language of the ITN interview in which she said that "most" of the nation's eggs were afflicted with salmonella.

But Mr John Biffen's strictures in *The Times* yesterday, linking the refusal to apologize with a general "arrogance" within the Government, is wide of the mark. Mrs Currie is far from being a typical member of this Government.

Labour may congratulate itself on yesterday's news. After the party's poor performance in the Epping by-election almost any straw of cheer will be welcome on the Opposition benches.

Mrs Currie's is the first resignation from Mrs Thatcher's administration in which the Opposition can claim to have played any part. The achievement will do little, however, to help the party through the continuing crisis of electoral confidence which the coming by-election at Richmond and the subsequent European elections look likely to highlight further.

Mrs Currie has done much good by her warning about the dangers of salmonella, just as she did good by her strident warnings about bad diet and the need for old people to wrap up in winter. She speaks instinctively for consumers rather than producers.

She did not, however, tell the truth. She did not say sorry. One of the most colourful post-war resigners, Mr Stanley Evans in 1950, also fell out with the farmers. He accused them of being "featherbedded" and was known as "featherbed Evans" for the rest of his career. The member for Derbyshire South may have to get used to "Egg Currie" for a long time to come.

## THE MUSIC STOPS

M. Jacques Delors did well to settle the portfolios of the new EEC Commission before the team headed off to its converted monastery in the Ardennes yesterday. The "night of the long knives" ritual was overdue for abolition.

Although the style of allotting responsibilities has been improved, the substance arouses more questions. The division of EEC "cabinet" posts has been compared by M. Delors, with some reason, to solving Rubik's cube. Part of the difficulty is that, as President of the Commission, he has to take what governments send him. Even top quality appointees selected in this way may not make a natural team; and this time not all EEC governments have given of their best, despite the obvious importance of this next four-year term.

With 17 commissioners, there are not enough serious jobs to go round, even with the Commission's enlarged responsibilities. This is a problem affecting more than national pride: there is no more fertile target for a lobbyist than an underemployed commissioner. Finally, the President has a duty, as M. Delors has been reminding us in recent months, to resist political pressures from member governments on behalf of their nationals.

Mr Leon Brittan, Lord Cockfield's successor, has done better than might have been expected, being given competition policy as anticipated but taking over, in addition, the task of liberalizing financial services. This constitutes a concession both to Britain and to common sense: to Britain, by sweetening the pill of losing the internal market portfolio, and to common sense, since Mr Martin Bangemann, the extremely able new West German commissioner for the internal market, hails from a country which is reticent about liberalizing services.

M. Delors has also chosen wisely in giving Madame Christiane Scrivener the sensitive responsibility for VAT harmonization. She is known to favour a more flexible approach than Lord Cockfield's and to understand the political impossibility, for Britain and Ireland, of abandoning zero rating for "social" items such as children's clothing and food.

The principal questions arise over three Delors appointments. The first is his choice of Signor Carlo Ripa de Meana for the environment. After his inept performance in social

affairs, his appointment by Italy for a second term did not exactly set the bells pealing in Brussels. To have given him a job which is bound to move sharply up the agenda and which will be increasingly in the public eye suggests that the greening of Europe is one of M. Delors' blind spots.

But it is in agriculture and external affairs that M. Delors looks like having made the misjudgements he will most regret. Mr Raymond McSharry, the new agriculture commissioner, is personally competent and experienced; but the principle of independence from national governments will be put to a severe test by giving an Irishman the job of reforming agricultural subsidies.

This might matter less were it not for the decision to put Mr Frans Andriessen in charge of external relations. The job will include responsibility for rescuing the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations from collapse and, a little further down the road, ensuring that the single market of 1992 neither leads, nor is perceived by outsiders to lead, to "Fortress Europe". For both tasks Mr Andriessen will require a conversion as sweeping as St Paul's.

As agriculture commissioner, his anti-free trade fundamentalism — he is on record as saying that Europe will never abandon export subsidies and that farmers must not be left to the vicissitudes of markets — put him in head-on confrontation with the United States. And he will take agriculture with him into his new job, since it is the key to progress in the Uruguay Round. The fact that Mr Clayton Yeutter, with whose philosophy as US trade representative Mr Andriessen was wholly out of sympathy, will be Mr Bush's new agriculture secretary, makes Mr Andriessen the last man M. Delors should have picked to end the deadlock. His choice will raise questions abroad about the Commission's real determination to do so.

The general lesson to be drawn is that the principle of independence among the EEC commissioners needs to be understood in a wider sense. M. Delors has made much of keeping governments at arm's length: the next Commission President will have to take equal care that they cannot be identified with any of the lobbies which besiege the Berlaymont, and whose influence can only increase as Europe moves towards integration.

## TOO LITTLE LEVY

The betting industry in Britain is huge and growing. It is estimated that the turnover will be more than £3.1 billion in the current financial year, and its scale was illustrated yesterday when Grand Met (owners of the Mecca chain of 800 shops) paid £331 million for the William Hill business (of 906 shops), making it the second biggest chain in the country.

This is obviously a game for big players, if not necessarily for big-hearted ones. Bookmakers are not legendary for generosity and good spirit; even so, in the current deadlocked negotiations over the betting Levy, they have surpassed their own worst reputations.

The dispute is between the Horserace Betting Levy Board and its Bookmakers' Committee over the amount of its turnover that the betting industry should pay to support the sport upon which its livelihood depends. The present rate is 0.88 per cent which provides racing with £28 million. The many elements within the rest of the racing industry, in an unusual show of unity, want to raise it to up to 4 per cent of turnover.

The demand for a substantial increase is just. The bookmakers may live to regret the day their determination to keep down the Levy meant that the Home Secretary had to be asked to arbitrate.

When the Levy Board was set up in 1961 to distribute funds from bookmakers, those funds were voluntary. But payment was made compulsory in 1964, and the principle that bookmakers have a duty to support and enhance the high quality of British racing has been accepted since then.

A thriving racing environment would mean

expansion in betting, so surely the bookmakers should be looking a good deal beyond their present payment to the Levy? In fact, the bookmakers became obdurate in their negotiations with the Levy Board: their final offer was a reduced one of 0.82 per cent when something of the order of 1 per cent might well have been enough to satisfy the Levy Board and avoid examination by the Home Secretary.

The bookmakers argue that their profits are within normal commercial practice. That is hard to assess. Undoubtedly, the biggest difference between the resources of British racing and its rivals is that the bulk of the profit from betting here is retained by bookmakers while elsewhere it is reinvested in the sport.

The British bookmakers' contribution may be compared with £186 million in France (6 per cent of the income of the state-run betting) and £68 million in Australia (3.5 per cent of the betting turnover in the various states). No other major racing nation allows off-course betting to be run by private bookmakers.

Racing is a valued part of our heritage. It is a major service industry which employs nearly 100,000 people. It is suffering from poor facilities for racegoers, inadequate prize money to attract owners, appalling wages in stables, and insufficient investment in security measures against doping.

The urgent requirements of racing can be funded through the Levy Board until such time as a more direct market mechanism for racing's services can be put in place. Mr Hurd should also consider a Government inquiry into how the sport is funded, how its problems are to be solved and its international prestige maintained.

## Vote to boycott degree exams

From the Rector of Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, and others

Sir, We are distressed to learn that a majority of the members of the Association of University Teachers (AUT) who participated in the recent ballot, voted in favour of boycotting all work associated with the examination process (report, December 14). We understand and share the frustration felt by the academic community in the face of the continuing erosion of academic salaries.

The decline in real terms now amounts to over 20 per cent during the last decade. It is equally evident by comparison with other professional salaries, significantly including the Civil Service. The announcement by the Secretary of State for Education and Science of an increase of the recurrent grant to the UGC for 1989-90 of 3.8 per cent, when the predicted rate of inflation will be substantially higher, does not inspire optimism for an early remedy.

Against this background, our ability to recruit, retain and motivate able academic staff is gravely weakened. The quality of the contributions which universities are able to make to society, industry and commerce is now most seriously threatened.

All of us joined the AUT at some stage in our earlier academic career. We saw no reason to withdraw, when we found ourselves bearing the responsibility for a university institution. It would therefore be with the greatest regret that we would now feel compelled to resign were the AUT to undertake this indefensible boycott.

Whilst one can sympathise with the feeling that "something must be done" the action proposed by the AUT is perverse on several counts. It is unlikely that it would allow Mr Kenneth Baker to extract more funds from the Treasury. Even more importantly, the only segment of the community that would be immediately hurt are our own students. An action which will disadvantage the very students whom we have so carefully recruited to our universities could never be justifiable.

We cannot, in conscience, support such action and would appeal to all our colleagues to honour their contracts and their obligations. Yours faithfully,

ERIC A. ASH, Rector, Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine.

JOHN D. ASHWORTH, Vice-Chancellor, University of Salford, CLARK L. BRUNDIN, Vice-Chancellor, University of Warwick, JOHN H. HORLOCK, Vice-Chancellor, Open University, DENNIS LAWTON, Director, Institute of Education, University of London, LAURENCE W. MARTIN, Vice-Chancellor, University of Newcastle, Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, Exhibition Road, SW7.

## Drinking on TV

From the Director of Television, IBA

Sir, The General Secretary of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association (December 14) is wrong in alleging that the IBA's survey on "Alcohol in ITV and Channel 4 programmes" deliberately set out to invalidate NVALA research. Far from being a "knee-jerk" reaction, the IBA report was completed and sent to Mr John Wakeman, MP, Chairman of the Inter-ministerial Group on Alcohol Misuse, in August, well before the NVALA survey was published in November. The IBA's press release was timed to coincide with the press conference arranged by Mr Wakeman's inter-ministerial group.

He is, however, correct in pointing out that the terms of reference of the IBA's research were quite different from NVALA's. The IBA monitored specific alcohol consumption seen on screen in programmes rather than the "overall presence of alcohol on television" — whatever that may mean. The IBA's survey took account of the context in which drinking took place.

Neither in its programmes nor in its research does the IBA minimise the problems which can be associated with alcohol. Yours faithfully, DAVID CLEGG, Director of Television, Independent Broadcasting Authority, 70 Brompton Road, SW3.

## Response to Arafat

From Mr Jon Kimche

Sir, Mr George Shultz has wisely decided, despite understandable Israeli doubts, to cut the Gordian knot and put the onus on the PLO — not just on Mr Arafat — to say clearly whether it stands by the decisions of the Palestine National Council taken last month at Algiers or whether it has now abandoned them in favour of the declaration made by Mr Arafat in Geneva.

Which then is the real Arafat: the PNC or the Geneva Arafat? The gulf between them is considerable.

There had been nothing ambiguous in the PNC position. It was set out without ambiguity in three declarations passed by the council on November 15: the declaration of a Palestinian state, the declaration calling for an international conference and the "political conference" with which the PNC concluded its proceedings.

The relevant elements of these decisions were not in the declaration of a Palestinian state. This

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Closer control of bank lending

From Mr Paul Baran

Sir, Inflation remains the unbeaten enemy and the Chancellor continues to put his faith in the exclusive weapon of high interest rates. It is a weapon that acts on only one side of the demand-supply equation.

In spite of a virtual doubling of base rates, from 7½ to 15 per cent, bank credit continues to expand — and no wonder. When the vendor creates, out of thin air and confidence, what he sells, the higher the price, the greater his urge to sell. The evidence is there in the figures of money supply and in the nation's daily shop-sox.

There has been no diminution in the distribution by the commercial banks of tempting brochures inviting us to borrow (and spend) up to the hilt of the value of our assets. Higher rates will, in due course, reduce the demand for loans and the income available for household spending; but it will be at the cost of lower industrial investment, attraction of unwelcome foreign hot money, overvaluation of sterling, and damage to the balance of payments.

The time has come to attack the supply side of the bank credit problem. The limit set on the banks' power of credit creation is partly prudential (the credit risk), partly the reserve of cash which banks must hold as a proportion of their deposit liabilities. In some countries including the United States, these reserve ratios are statutory, but adjustable. Changes in the ratios are the most immediate and powerful way of controlling the volume of bank credit, which is a multiplier of the cash reserve.

In the UK the cash reserve, of which the main element is a bank's balance at the Bank of England, is conventional, not statutory, but rigorously monitored by the central bank. In the 1960s and early 1970s the Bank of England was given the power to call "special deposits" from the commercial banks, as a percentage of their total customers' deposits. These special deposits were not counted as part of their conventional cash reserve.

The device was later merged into much cruder forms of direct, quantitative credit controls — the "corset" and the "ceiling" on advances. These tended to shift lending to the "fringe banks", with painful and memorable consequences. Thanks to the Bank Act and the Financial Services Act there is now no danger of a

repetition of this diversion of lending activity to uncontrolled companies.

There is a powerful case for a renewed attempt to control bank credit at its base. A call for special deposits might lead to some rise in interest rates, but it would compel the commercial banks to call in loans and adopt a more severe and selective attitude to demands for additional credit. If no interest were paid on special deposits, they would provide a healthy penalty for over-lending by the commercial banks.

This solution of the monetary supply puzzle is perhaps too simple and common-sense to occur to the wealth of theoretical and technical talent at the disposal of the Treasury, the Bank of England and Downing Street. So far there has not been a whisper of its being considered.

Yours faithfully, PAUL BARAN, The Reform Club, 104 Pall Mall, SW1, December 15.

From the Chairman of The Savers' Union

Sir, As a former MP, I feel compelled to respond to the Secretary of the Association of Bankrupts who argues (December 12) that Mr John de Courcy Ling should not express an opinion about consumer credit because he is a well-paid MEP. Westminster MPs and MEPs receive the same salary from HM Treasury. The idea that they should all remain silent on such issues is not very sensible.

I think that the Government's measures to cool the economy do deserve and will receive a response from the individual citizen. Continental habits over credit are more orthodox than ours. In Germany, people save for 3 per cent interest, such is their fear and memory of inflation and their respect for sound money.

As for the "money greed of the huge credit institutions", would lower interest rates actually restrict or expand demand for credit? Remember that the saver, for so many years cheated by interest rates lower than inflation, deserves a fair return on what he has saved.

I remain your obedient servant, JOHN PAGE, Chairman, The Savers' Union, 3½ London Wall Buildings, London Wall, EC2, December 12.

### Nurse grading

From the Director of the Office of Health Economics

Sir, Figures recently published by the Secretary of State for Health go a long way to explain the current discontent within the nursing profession, but there is nothing professedly illogical or inherently unfair in them. Nevertheless anyone given a lower grading than other nurses who started at the same level may feel aggrieved. It is a monumental challenge to managers to explain to more than 44,000 individual nurses why they have received a smaller increase than their colleagues.

The lesson for the future must be that the management of human resources within the NHS needs to be improved, and perhaps reorganised at the highest level on to a regional or district basis rather than hoping to create universal good will through a national scheme to distribute a substantial wage increase. Yours faithfully, GEORGE TEELING SMITH, Director, Office of Health Economics, 12 Whitehall, SW1, December 7.

### Hereford Cathedral

From the Chapter Clerk of Hereford Cathedral

Sir, In response to Mr Ivor Bulmer-Thomas (December 6), may I make four points clear.

1. The cost of the marble and tiled platform under Hereford Cathedral's central tower has been largely met by donations, the Dean and Chapter having to find only £5,227 out of the total £26,389 required.
2. Although Mr Bulmer-Thomas states that "this has greatly upset the Friends of Hereford Cathedral" they lead the small list of benefactors with a generous gift of £5,000.
3. Far from blocking the view, the

### Walking to school

From Mr Jeremy C. Burrows

Sir, Mrs Holden (December 8) is mistaken in criticising the law lords for their strict application of section 39 of the Education Act 1944. Contrary to her belief, the courts' power to "interpret" statutes is a residuary power, only to be used when the natural and ordinary meaning of the words employed by Parliament is unclear or ambiguous.

The relevant words of section 39(5) are: "In this section the expression... 'walking distance' means, in relation to a child who has not attained the age of eight years two miles, and in the case of any other child three miles, measured by the nearest available route."

Faced with such clear and unambiguous language, there is surely nothing the courts can do but apply the section, if Mrs Holden wishes to see a change in the law, it is to the legislature, not the judges, that she ought to look. Yours faithfully, JEREMY C. BURROWS, Magdalene College, Cambridge, December 8.

### Hands off!

From Mr Robert Barkshire

Sir, Lord Moyne's defence of traditional station clocks (December 13) must recall to many that surely most socially well-known beauty at Victoria. What countless trysts have been associated with "meet you under the clock at Victoria", always assuming this to be more mutually acceptable than that other past favourite — "outside Swan & Edgar's". "Meet you under the digital"? Heaven, or British Rail, preserve us! Yours sincerely, ROBERT BARKSHIRE, The Boat House, Fowey, Cornwall.

### Sweetness and light

From Mr Michael Palmer

Sir, Mr Meades refers in "Eating out" (December 10) to a "pudding wine". Whilst it is comforting that at least your newspaper is aware that there is still a course called pudding, it is disturbing that your correspondent has overlooked the dessert which of course antedates the pudding.

Dessert, consisting essentially of fruit and nuts, provides comparatively little difficulty in the choice of an appropriate wine. Pudding may range from apple crumble to zabaglione and it would therefore be useful to have some indication from Mr Meades as to what could best constitute a "pudding wine". Yours faithfully, MICHAEL PALMER, 8 rue des Franciscains, Luxembourg (GD), December 12.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (01)782 5046.

## Political bias in the arts

From Sir Hugh Leggat

Sir, Lord Goodman writes ("This tragedy for the arts", December 10) that governmental appointments to the whole range of national art organisations are being restricted to people holding right-wing views. With respect, the evidence does not bear this out.

It would be invidious to name names but as one wholly involved in the arts world at the present time I am convinced that Lord Goodman's "sources" in the present Government" are mistaken in this regard. This false idea has been put about by a disenchanted minority and as such should be ignored.

Lord Goodman also asserts that the arms-length principle is being breached. I cannot speak for the Arts Council but as far as the visual arts are concerned my experience suggests that this is not so. To take one example, the Government allocates millions of pounds of tax-payers' money to the National Heritage Memorial Fund. And it is unthinkable seriously to suggest that its trustees do not act totally independently.

Further, it is public knowledge that neither the Secretary of State for the Environment nor the Minister for the Arts — who are jointly accountable to the nation at the end of the day — has ever sought to influence a decision by the trustees of the fund. Yours faithfully, HUGH LEGGATT, Leggat Brothers, 17 Duke Street, St James's, SW1.

From Mr David Tudor-Pole

Sir, We should feel "nothing but shame" about the "mental torment" and "torture" inflicted on "people with a high sense of civil responsibility" writes Lord Goodman, apparently in reference to "volunteer boards" supplied with taxpayers' money "just short" of what they need!

Has it not occurred to anyone connected with the Arts Council that it is just this kind of condescending hyperbole that almost everyone — who in the normal course of daily life copes with such a contingency — finds so off-putting?

The Arts Council currently owns a vast collection of fairly modern British art, much of which now rarely is seen. Why should it not take advantage of a buoyant art market to recycle some of this unused collection in order to reduce the suffering of which Lord Goodman speaks? Yours truly, DAVID TUDOR-POLE, Flete, Ermington, Devon.

## Heritage for sale

From Dr R. W. J. Keay

Sir, The Rysbrack bust of James Gibbs referred to by Marcus Binney (article, December 3) has indeed been sold to the Victoria and Albert Museum for £465,000. However, it would be a mistake to think that this sum has come to St Martin-in-the-Fields, as Mr Binney implies.

Substantial legal costs had to be met, arising from lengthy deliberations by the Chancellor of the Diocese of London; and there was also the fee to Christie's, generously set at a lower rate than usual.

The chancellor ordered that the net proceeds should be paid to the Consistory Court. Thus, although the property of the bust was vested in the churchwardens, the proceeds from its sale are held by the court and can only be used as and when the court thinks fit. Yours faithfully, RONALD KEAY, 38 Birch Grove, Cobham, Surrey.

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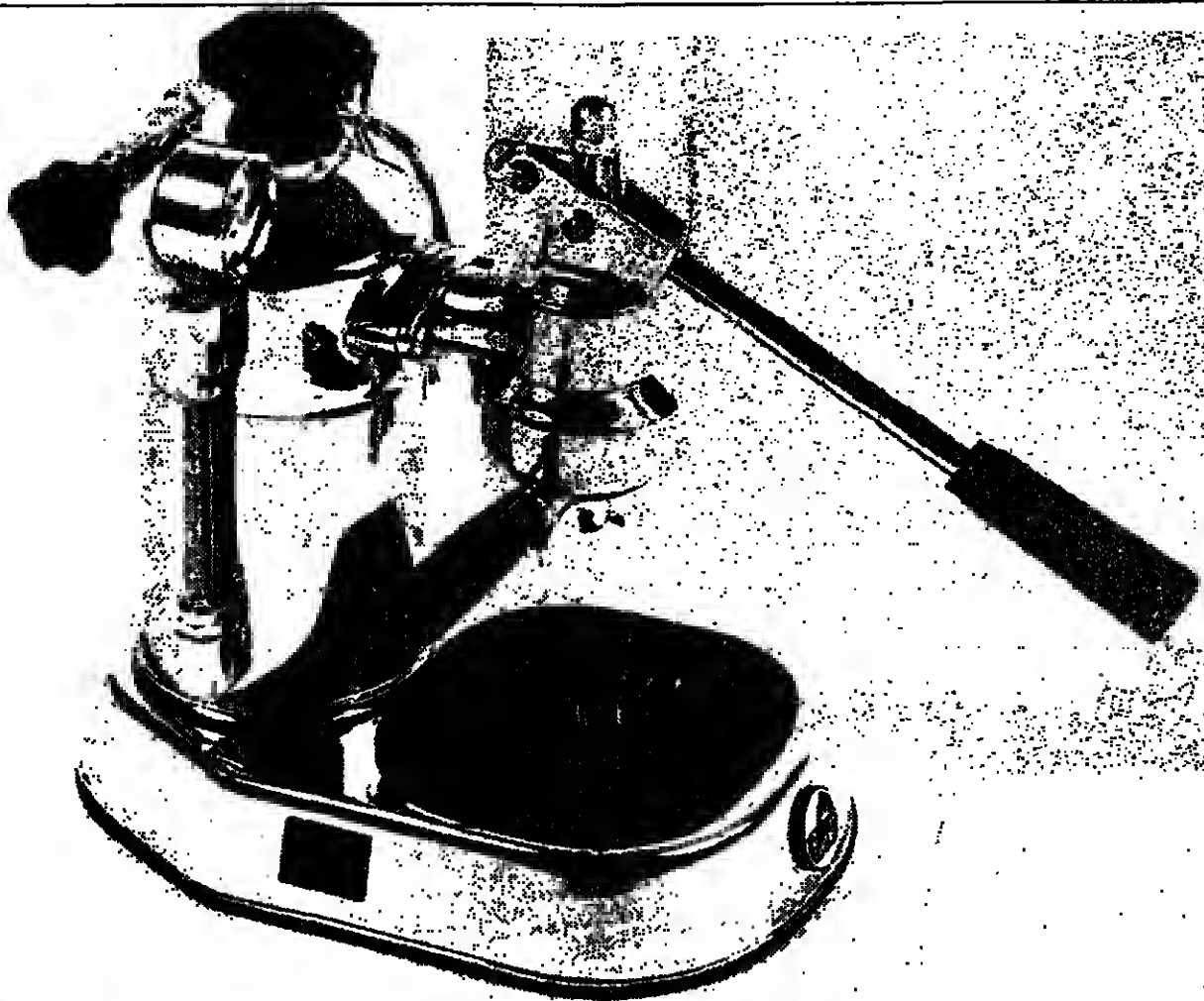






# SHOPPING

## Grounds for coffee



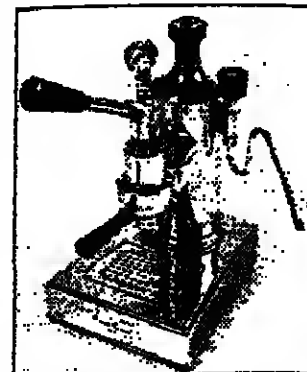
Gleaming: Pavoni "Professional" espresso/cappuccino machine, £320; Authentics, 42 Shelton Street, London WC2

Now that the ancient art of tea-brewing has been reduced to the dropping of a tea-bag into a mug of boiling water, followed by the squalid ritual of retrieving the bag (by this time oozing brown gunge from every perforation) and the tipping of the horrible item into the waste-disposal unit, it is hardly surprising that tea-drinking has gone into decline as a national pastime.

Contrast this miserable chore with the creative scope that coffee-making offers. Not instant coffee of course, which, despite all the expensive television advertising attempting to convince you to the contrary, is the liquid equivalent of sliced white bread — and is about as romantic — but the honest-to-goodness, freshly prepared article.

You can do it all perfectly well on an open fire with a jug and a spoon, but for those with a mind for it, coffee-making is like an elaborate sport, such as skiing, in which acquiring the proper equipment is most of the point. And, just like skiing, the technological stakes keep being raised. The kit becomes ever more elaborate: aluminium is replaced by stainless

To make a cup of coffee you need boiling water, a spoon and a jug — so why bother with a £400 espresso machine? Deyan Sudjic looks at the bankable bean



Cassia brass/chrome coffee-maker, £425, Harrods

steel, gas by electricity, and valves by microchip controls. It is perfectly possible to spend more than £400 on a coffee-making machine that is so polished and poised, so mechanically honed, that it is hard to believe that all it does is produce tiny quantities of hot, brown liquid.

For the real coffee fiend, coffee-making is a three act opera. The prelude includes roasting and grinding before the performance really gets under way with percolation. Quite clearly, mere taste is strictly a secondary issue here. It is the physical ritual of pressing buttons and pulling levers that counts.

The sense of connoisseurship that comes from making an effort, and putting on a performance, is also an important factor. In fact coffee-

making is never exactly difficult, even with the most high-powered Pavoni machine, but it transforms the most ordinary of occasions into something special with surprisingly little effort. Offering a cup of freshly-made espresso scores as many points as a cordon bleu main course, but is an awful lot easier to carry off.

What makes coffee-making such a promising ground for gadget addicts is the immense variety of methods available. You can choose a method and a machine to match your personal aspirations, or even switch about from one to another. For the briskly eff-

that launched the whole coffee-bar boom of the 1950s with the voluptuous curves of its chrome-plated machines. Their physical presence made them the centre-piece of thousands of Bohemian hang-outs on Left Banks the world over. It is a tradition which still survives. The new Emporio Armani store in London will open next year with a restaurant built around a venerable, antique espresso-maker embellished with an eagle and looking the picture of carefully-sculptured mechanical genius, just like a Bugatti engine.

The Italians tend to make coffee machines which draw a discreet veil over exactly what is going on inside, but concentrate instead on creating a beautiful object. They have always borrowed from art in making coffee machines. Even the old Mokas bore an uncanny resemblance to Cubist painting. Now the Alessi company is busily turning out ever more rarefied architect-designed coffee-makers. They even have one which has a lid that looks suspiciously like the dome of St Paul's.

Somewhere between the two extremes of Italian ro-



Espresso Gaggia, £99.95, from Coffee Connection, 62 Pentonville Road, London N1

icient, steel-rimmed technocrat there is the well-oiled hi-tech of a Braun percolator sipping coffee drip by drip with all the precision of a laboratory experiment. Even further off the map on the Teutonic scale is the Krups (although it has no relation to the Krupp family) — imagine sunglasses from Boeing. Making coffee this way is a process that is specifically designed to show off the cleverness of the machine. Coffee is visibly put through its paces. Water is boiled at one end of the machine and chased up and down the apparatus to no very great purpose.



Krups espresso mini coffee-maker, £69.50, Heal's

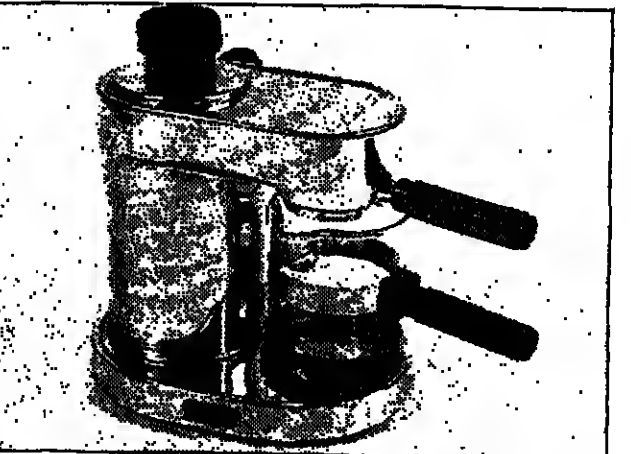


Braun pre-programmable filter coffee machine, £40, Harrods

At the other extreme is the flamboyant Italian art deco of the Pavoni company; it offers coffee-making for born romantics. This was the firm

mance and Teutonic efficiency are the Gallic jug machines, the cafetieres. They demand a separate kettle to boil the water, but they do allow you the curiously satisfying sensation of being able to detonate the plunger to make your coffee.

You can't necessarily hurry making a cup of real coffee. The most elaborate I ever had was in somebody's office in New York, where it took a good 20 minutes from start to finish, and involved bubbling hot milk through the coffee, a slice of lemon peel and a sprinkling of cinnamon. But it certainly made all that plink, plink, plink business from the television commercials look pretty hollow.



Gran Galea, £50, Conran Shop, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3

### WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 16

**ESCORT**

(b) To pay for, maintain, from the Old French escorter an Anglo-French form as in *escort and escort*. *Escort*: "What are they Children? Who sustains 'em? How are they escorted?"

**QUERSPRUNG**

(c) At skiing a jump turn in which a skier lands at right angles to the pole or poles, from the German for a diagonal jump.

**BIRILLULO**

(a) From Kirriwan and the Tribesmen Islands, a ritual in which two clans settle a dispute

by producing yams, as at an English country flower and vegetable show, and comparing one against another. (At least according to that confessed romancer, Bronislaw Malinowski).

**MERLON**

(c) In fortification the part of an embattled parapet between two embrasures, a similar structure on a battleship, from the diminutive of the Latin *mergus* a pincerfork. "This battery is built of stone, and the merlons consist of cedar joists, filled in with earth."

Help him ring in the New Year.  
Give him a phone for Christmas.



It's difficult to find a present for the man in your life.

A present that's personal, original and won't be buried in a cupboard by Boxing Day.

An extra phone from British Telecom might be just the thing.

Perhaps a phone extension in his bedroom for those late night calls.

That would be a lot more useful, we think, than the usual aftershave or spotted tie.

And because British Telecom phones are regarded as the most reliable around, he'll

have no excuse for not calling you.

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WINTER BOOTS FROM £189 TO £99.50





Little wonder they don't build cars like they used to.  
**Building a pen is difficult enough.**

Oh, the elegant lines of the 1925 Hispano Suiza. Oh, the elegant lines of the 1927 Parker Duofold.

The car may no longer be available, but our centenary has provided a suitable excuse for the return of this favourite Parker pen design.

Like today's top cars the Duofold Centennial's working parts are state-of-the-art. But unlike them, its workmanship is somewhat old fashioned.

Rather than mould the cap and barrel 'en masse,' we machine them as we did in the old days, from a solid block.

Rather than cut the nib from some modern metal, we stay true to gold.

Rather than slit the nib on some new fangled contraption, we still do the job by hand, using a blade no thicker than a human hair.

And just as Hispano Suiza road tested its cars thoroughly after manufacture, each Duofold Centennial is examined by a white gloved inspector. If deemed perfect, it is filled, written with and cleaned before being released for sale.

It is an exhausting way to produce a pen. But, as with the Hispano Suiza, the looks and handling provide ample reward.



⚡ PARKER 



# Burglary gang spreads motorway terror

Continued from page 1 abandoned near a ditch. After an argument, the two men were taken into a field doused in petrol and tied up.

The younger man was knocked unconscious but his employer was stabbed to death with, it is believed, a machete knife.

The younger man regained consciousness two hours later and struggled across muddy fields to a cottage in Blackman's Lane, Warringham.

There David Gentes, aged 15, was woken by his labrador dog Rachel barking at about 2.45am. He said: "I looked out and saw a guy obviously in distress, screaming, 'Please help me, please help me.'"

"I rushed downstairs and let him in. He told me his mate had been killed by a gang for arguing."

As police went to the scene, the gang drove the five miles to Oxted, in the Austin Princess, arriving at 4am.

The target was a secluded £500,000 five-bedroom house set in two acres with a swimming pool and tennis court owned by Mr Richard Napier, a retired businessman, and his wife Margaret and their son Timothy, aged 40.

The gang entered the house in Woodhurst Lane through an unsecured window. The family was woken by the intruders, wearing black balaclavas and believed to be carrying a gun.

According to police, a confrontation took place in the bedroom which left Mr Timothy Napier, fighting for his life from severe stab wounds in East Surrey Hospital.

The raiders then made their way to the village of Fetcham near Leatherhead 19 miles away and broke into the semi-detached home of a divorced teacher and her boy friend by smashing a window.

The couple were tied up and their cars, a white Renault Five and a red Vauxhall Cavalier hatchback were stolen.

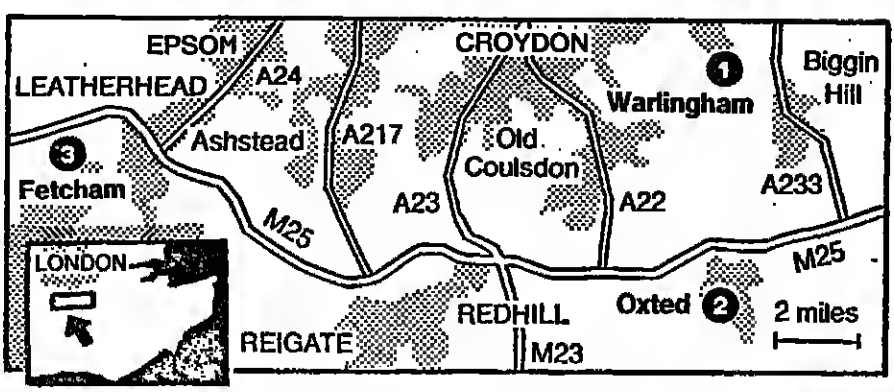
As details of the gang's activities began to circulate London detectives from Croydon matched information from the Surrey police with the suspects they are hunting for eight attacks since November 6.

They have all taken place at points off the M25 in south London at Coulsdon, Raynes Park, Shirley, Leatherhead and Ashstead.

In one attack a woman was raped after the gang broke into their house.



Police searching fields at Warringham where the murder took place.



The pub where the murdered man and his mate were ambushed.



The house in Oxted where a businessman was stabbed.



The next target in Fetcham; the occupants were tied up.

# Currie resigns amid more writs

Continued from page 1 was announced at 2pm, half an hour before Mr MacGregor went to the Commons to announce the buy-in scheme having been strongly criticised by Labour MPs that morning for disclosing the scheme in a press statement.

Mr MacGregor said he was not yet in a position to give details of a scheme which would normally have taken weeks to put together, but was working "flat out" with his officials and expected to be able to do so on Monday. He had to clear it with the EEC.

He stressed that the scheme was not an admission of legal liability. It was being introduced as "a wholly exceptional measure in view of the present state of the egg market". Sources suggested it would cost several million pounds and last weeks rather than months, claiming "slender" of goods, malicious falsehoods and negligent misrepresentation". Yet more may follow.

It is thought that the writs will be forwarded by the Department of Health to the Treasury Solicitor's Office on behalf of the Government. Mrs Currie will not be personally liable.

Ministers do not believe the cases will come to court. They believe the writs are a bargaining counter and that the producers would not risk evidence of salmonella in eggs being produced in court.

Mr Keith Patten, secretary of the British Egg Producers Association, said last night "Mrs Currie's resignation is the best Christmas present egg producers could have had. We are delighted that she has gone but it is all very well for her to create this mess and walk away when we are still left with the catastrophe."

They believed her resignation had been essential to restore public confidence. Mr Robin Cook, the shadow Health Secretary, said: "It's a pity that Mrs Currie has been caught out by going to far. It's a pity that the rest of us are left with the bill for her added words."

But Mr Frank Field, Labour chairman of the all-party Health and Social Services committee, said that it would take "more than rotten eggs from the National Farmers Union to keep Edwina down" and that her departure was a set back for anyone interested in opening up Government.

The Thames Valley Eggs writ issued on Thursday night is to be served on Mrs Currie by post next week, it emerged yesterday. Mean while 10 more writs were issued against her at midday yesterday by egg producers claiming "slender" of goods, malicious falsehoods and negligent misrepresentation". Yet more may follow.

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# Bookmakers in battle

Continued from page 1 Hill also has a very large credit business, well-established on-course representation and a strong group of shops in the provinces nationwide, whereas our strength in retail betting is in London.

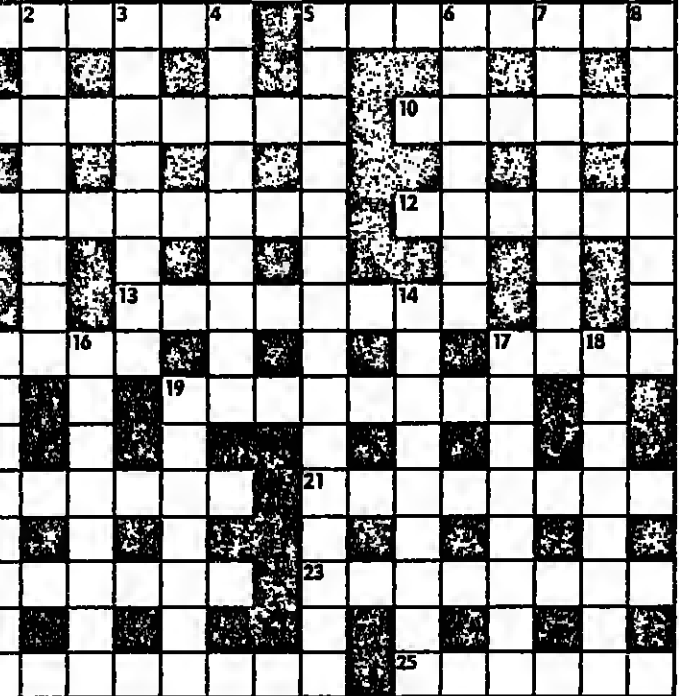
"We will be able to enjoy economies of scale, and create a very strong company. Retail betting is a growing and broadening market, with an increasingly upmarket image and a great future."

William Hill's 10 per cent holding in Satellite Informa-

tion Services - which relays television coverage of racing to betting shops - has been retained by Sears, underlying the strength of future prospects for that company.

Hills will be reviewing the sponsorship policies of both organizations. The William Hill group is the biggest sponsor among bookmakers, supporting the Sprint Championship at York, the Lincolnshire at Doncaster, the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood and the Cambridgeshire at Newmarket.

## THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 17,855



- ACROSS**
- Trades in many vessels (6).
  - Tea with pastry, say, or Indian cake (8).
  - Some pressure in factory with a single refreshment counter (8).
  - Put up stern notice about key (6).
  - Chart sounds a suitable one for wall display (8).
  - They show incorrect readings (6).
  - Object of archaeological interest (8) - it recurs in a Byzantine craft (8).
  - Entrance, using commercial with sex appeal (4).
  - A new cricket side without a name (4).
  - Erotic dancing - interrupted before the end (8).
  - Sort of sun that grows on Billy (6).
  - Southern leather works, say, No. Comish in mine (8).
  - Religion's popular role, according to Marx (6).
  - A police chief is on drugs (4-4).
  - Clever fellow has been involved first with Beatrice (8).
  - Hardly ever depend on an artist (6).
- DOWN**
- Force to put one means of transport above another (8).
  - Fellow totally deflated not to get applause (4,4).
  - Journalist in charge of the agony column? (3-6).
  - Arsenal in Wales? Not on this ground! (7,4,4).
  - Mistake in holy book? No wonder he's white-faced! (7).
  - Reptile secure under ground (8).
  - Soldier carrying sort of rubber ball (8).
  - Gallant Maurice! (9).
  - Man comes into a lot of money for devastating device (4,4).
  - Like the games one improvised in maths! (8).
  - Pinned down wreck on a chart (2,6).
  - Pass repair (8).
  - Edward followed fielder and indicated where the game was (7).

### THE POUND

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.22	2.10
Austria Sch	23.54	22.14
Belgium Fr	68.80	65.30
Canada \$	1.28	1.18
Denmark Kr	12.77	12.17
Finland Mk	7.85	7.48
France Fr	11.30	10.78
Germany DM	3.41	3.13
Greece Dr	338	323
Hong Kong \$	14.87	13.92
Ireland Ir	1.225	1.175
Italy Lit	245	225
Japan Yen	3.745	3.545
Netherlands Gld	12.28	11.88
Norway Kr	4.75	4.52
Portugal Esc	214	203
South Africa Rd	11.52	10.93
Spain Pta	166	156
Sweden Kr	11.52	10.93
Switzerland Fr	2.78	2.64
Turkey Lira	3750	3150
USA \$	1.925	1.805
Yugoslavia Dnr	10700	8500

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers cheques.

Retail Price Index: 118.0 (November)

London: The FT index closed up 8.7 at 1436.0

### WORD-WATCHING

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which of the possible definitions is correct?

By Philip Howard

**ESCOT**  
 a. An Eastern Scot  
 b. To pay for  
 c. A small escort

**QUERSPRUNG**  
 a. Elastic sided  
 b. A style of camp dancing  
 c. A bar at dining

**BIRITILLO**  
 a. A competition with yams  
 b. A cavalry march  
 c. A violent brouhaha

**MERLON**  
 a. A small hawk  
 b. In each or beilich  
 c. Part of a parapet

Answers on page 14

### WEATHER

Bright start to the day over much of the country with frost over many central and southern areas. It will also remain sunny over central, southern and eastern areas. Scotland will have sunny spells and scattered showers, although rain will spread south to cover the whole of Scotland by midnight. Outlook: unsettled, with rain, particularly in the west.

### ABROAD

MIDWAY: (w=wind; d=drizzle; lg=fog; s=sun; sh=shower; st=storm; l=low; c=cloud; r=rain)

Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
Aleppo 11.52	10	10	Moscow 14.57	8	8
Algeria 15.59	10	10	Nairobi 14.57	8	8
Amman 15.59	10	10	Paris 14.57	8	8
Amsterdam 15.59	10	10	Rome 14.57	8	8
Antwerp 15.59	10	10	Sao Paulo 14.57	8	8
Athens 15.59	10	10	Seoul 14.57	8	8
Bahia 15.59	10	10	Stockholm 14.57	8	8
Bangkok 15.59	10	10	Taipei 14.57	8	8
Barcelona 15.59	10	10	Tokyo 14.57	8	8
Bombay 15.59	10	10	Washington 14.57	8	8
Buenos Aires 15.59	10	10	Wellington 14.57	8	8
Calcutta 15.59	10	10	Yokohama 14.57	8	8
Cairo 15.59	10	10			
Cape Town 15.59	10	10			
Chicago 15.59	10	10			
Cincinnati 15.59	10	10			
Cologne 15.59	10	10			
Copenhagen 15.59	10	10			
Dublin 15.59	10	10			
Hankow 15.59	10	10			
Hong Kong 15.59	10	10			
Imbabura 15.59	10	10			
Intanbul 15.59	10	10			
Jakarta 15.59	10	10			
London 15.59	10	10			
Lyons 15.59	10	10			
Manila 15.59	10	10			
Medan 15.59	10	10			
Mexico 15.59	10	10			
Moscow 15.59	10	10			
Nairobi 15.59	10	10			
Paris 15.59	10	10			
Rome 15.59	10	10			
Sao Paulo 15.59	10	10			
Seoul 15.59	10	10			
Stockholm 15.59	10	10			
Taipei 15.59	10	10			
Tokyo 15.59	10	10			
Washington 15.59	10	10			
Wellington 15.59	10	10			
Yokohama 15.59	10	10			

### AROUND BRITAIN

Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
Scarbrough 6.5	8	8	London 6.5	8	8
Sheffields 6.5	8	8	Manchester 6.5	8	8
Nottingham 6.5	8	8	Birmingham 6.5	8	8
Cardiff 6.5	8	8	Belfast 6.5	8	8
London 6.5	8	8	Edinburgh 6.5	8	8
Manchester 6.5	8	8	Belfast 6.5	8	8
Birmingham 6.5	8	8	London 6.5	8	8
Nottingham 6.5	8	8	Manchester 6.5	8	8
Cardiff 6.5	8	8	Birmingham 6.5	8	8
London 6.5	8	8	Nottingham 6.5	8	8
Manchester 6.5	8	8	Cardiff 6.5	8	8
Birmingham 6.5	8	8	London 6.5	8	8
Nottingham 6.5	8	8	Manchester 6.5	8	8
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London 6.5	8	8	Nottingham 6.5	8	8
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Birmingham 6.5	8	8	London 6.5	8	8
Nottingham 6.5	8	8	Manchester 6.5	8	8
Cardiff 6.5	8	8	Birmingham 6.5	8	8
London 6.5	8	8	Nottingham 6.5	8	8
Manchester 6.5	8	8	Cardiff 6.5	8	8
Birmingham 6.5	8	8	London 6.5	8	8
Nottingham 6.5	8	8	Manchester 6.5	8	8
Cardiff 6.5	8	8	Birmingham 6.5	8	8
London 6.5	8	8	Nottingham 6.5	8	8
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Cardiff 6.5	8	8	Birmingham 6.5	8	8
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Birmingham 6.5	8	8	London 6.5	8	8
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Manchester 6.5	8	8	Cardiff 6.5	8	8
Birmingham 6.5	8	8	London 6.5	8	8
Nottingham 6.5	8	8	Manchester 6.5	8	8
Cardiff 6.5	8	8	Birmingham 6.5	8	8
London 6.5	8	8	Nottingham 6.5	8	8
Manchester 6.5	8	8	Cardiff 6.5	8	8
Birmingham 6.5	8	8	London 6.5	8	8
Nottingham 6.5	8	8	Manchester		



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SATURDAY DECEMBER 17 1988

**Executive Editor  
David Brewerton  
Storehouse  
new buying  
by Edelman**

Mr Asher Edelman, the Wall Street arbitrageur, is continuing to buy Storehouse shares. Yesterday he disclosed that he had increased his stake in Sir Terence Conran's Storehouse group by 500,000 shares. This brings the total he holds to 21.4 million, or 5.24 per cent, from the 5.12 per cent he recently declared.

The BHS-to-Habitat chain was this month forced to launch an inquiry into who was building up a stake in the business. Last year Storehouse fought off a £2 billion bid from Benlox after receiving a bid approach from Mr Tony Clegg's Mountleigh group.

**Beazer sale**

Beazer has sold another small chunk of the Pittsburgh-based Koppers group acquired last June. The Koppers science and technology centre, at Monroeville, near Pittsburgh, has been acquired by PPG Industries for \$8 million (£9.9 million).

**STOCK MARKET**

FT 30 Share	1436.0 (+8.7)
FT-SE 100	1773.7 (+10.5)
Bargains	19057
USM (Datastream)	146.16 (+0.15)
New York	Dow Jones 2139.29 (+6.29)
Tokyo	Nikkei Average 29536.71 (-169.04)
Hong Kong	Hang Seng 2629.16 (+1.94)
Amsterdam	Gen 280.2 (+1.9)
Sydney	AO 1447.1 (-16.2)
Frankfurt	Commerzbank 1610.6 (+18.5)
Brussels	General 5406.6 (+2.6)
Paris	CAC 393.4 (+0.2)
Zurich	SKA Gen 505.1 (-0.2)
London	FT-A All-Share n/a
FT-3000	n/a
FT Gold Mines	163.1 (-7.6)
FT Fixed Interest	96.15 (+0.19)
FT Govt Secs	86.85 (+0.31)
Recent issues	Page 20
Closing prices	Page 21

**MAIN PRICE CHANGES**

RISES:	
Bass	786 (+11)
Bees	1430 (+10)
DAKS Simpson A	820 (+15)
G Oliver	525 (+10)
Scholes	250 (+10)
Tate & Lyle	877.9 (+12)
Er Building & Eng	325 (+30)
De La Rue	391.7 (+10)
Haynes	537.9 (+12)
Emergrin	547.9 (+12)
Local London	594 (+15)
Presl Mariani	405 (+11)
Carlton Comm	232.5 (+10)
FALLS:	
Int Thomson	670 (-10)
Metas	220 (-10)
Boosey & Hawkes	220 (-12)
Henderson Admin	620 (-10)
Brappart Grundy	202.9 (-22)
Recent issues	Page 20
SEAG Volume	468.4m

**INTEREST RATES**

London Bank Base	13%
3-month interbank	13%-13.5%
3-month eligible bills	12%-12.5%
buying rate	
US Prime Rate	10.5%
Federal Funds	8.5%
3-month Treasury Bills	8.17-8.15%
30-year bonds	9.5%-9.5%

**CURRENCIES**

London:	New York:
£: \$1.8120	£: DM1.7625
£: DM3.1918	£: SwFr1.4845
£: SFr2.6580	£: FF6.0240
£: FF10.8592	£: Yen124.45
£: Yen225.14	£: Index:94.1
£: Index:77.7	ECU £0.649610
ECU £0.649610	SDR £n/a

**GOLD**

London Fixing:	
AM \$412.60 pm \$411.75	
close \$411.50-412.00 (2228.75-227.25)	
New York:	
Comex \$412.40-412.90	

**NORTH SEA OIL**

Brent (Jan)	pm \$15.10 bid
Dutchies latest trading price	

**THE TIMES  
STOCK  
WATCH**

0898 141 141

- Market news on Stock-watch yesterday included: Sears (02092) was 6p higher after the announcement that it would sell William Hill to Grand Metropolitan (01027), which shed 1p; Sun Alliance (02119) gained 11p on news from America on insurance premiums; Johnson Matthey (01317), working with Ford on a new catalytic converter, added 3p.
- Recent additions include: Bank of Scotland 91c; pref 03531; Leisure Investment 7c; conv pref 88 03532.
- Calls charged 5p for 8 seconds peak, 12 seconds off peak inc. VAT.

# Next rises on City hopes of Sears bid

By David Brewerton

The £331 million sale by Sears of the William Hill betting shop chain immediately fired speculation in the City that the move is a prelude to a bid for Next, the troubled High Street stores chain.

Only a week ago Next suffered a boardroom upheaval when Mr George Davies, the chairman and chief executive and his wife Liz, a director, were dismissed.

Sears, which owns Selfridges and a several other store chains including Saxe, Hornes, Fosters and Dolcis, has long been regarded as a bid target itself. The Fayed brothers, owners of Harrods and the House of Fraser group, have a 13 per cent stake in the company.

Mr Geoffrey Maitland Smith, Sears' chairman, said: "I cannot say we are not interested (in Next). Outsiders are looking at the two groups, with their mail order interests, and saying 'Good heavens, look at the fit'. We monitor all competitors on a day to day basis, including Next."

Next shares started the day down 1p at 130p. Until the announcement of the William Hill purchase by GrandMet, just 700,000 shares had been traded. In active dealings the price later climbed to 137p. By late afternoon more than 2 million shares had changed hands.

GrandMet's purchase of William Hill bookmakers to put alongside its existing

Mecca Bookmakers creates a chain to rival Ladbrokes with 1,700 branches.

The deal, which increases both earnings and assets for Sears, is unconditional, in that even if the Office of Fair Trading refers the purchase and it is blocked by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission the sale will stand. GrandMet would have to find a buyer if the deal was blocked.

Grand Metropolitan is catapulted into joint market leader by the deal. Earlier this year,

**Profiles**

Sir Gordon Borrie, the director general of the Office of Fair Trading, decided not to refer off-course bookmaking to the Monopolies Commission.

Expanded from the latest deal is Sears's 20 per cent stake in Satellite Information Services, as to include it would have required the consent of the other SIS shareholders.

Mr Maitland Smith said the sale comprises the 906 licensed betting offices in Britain and the Belgian betting division which has 370 outlets. The betting operations produced trading profits of £17.5 million in the year to January 31, 1988.

The sale will produce an extraordinary profit of about £310 million, and was struck with Grand Metropolitan after Sears received a number of rival offers.

Unlike Sears, Grand Metropolitan does see betting as part

of the general retail scene. Mr Allen Sheppard, chairman and chief executive of GrandMet, said: "Our intention is to build Grand Metropolitan as a leading multi-outlet retailer in the pub, restaurant, off-licence, optical and betting areas."

"These businesses all involve retail brand building and professional property management supported by marketing, personnel and systems expertise."

Mr Bob Green, chairman of Mecca Bookmakers who will be chairman of the new combined company, pointed out that they have overseas interests "which will now be developed rapidly."

"Grand Metropolitan's betting operations are now entering a period of rapid growth, following the pioneering development of SIS, in which Mecca took a strong lead."

When Grand Metropolitan sold Mecca to its management several years ago, it retained the betting operations.

Sears has been considering a sale of William Hill for many months, but agreed a deal in a matter of days. Mr Maitland Smith said: "When we were offered cash I had to consider, would I go out and buy William Hill if I had £331 million in my hands? It is a very attractive price for us."

GrandMet shares were 1p lower after the announcement at 431p. Sears rose 5p to 114p after touching 118p. Next shares rose to 135p, closing up 2p at 133p.



Reason for smiling: Caldecott, left, and Linaker of M&G at the group office at Tower Hill

## M&G profits steady

By Colin Campbell

M&G Group, Britain's largest unit trust management group, came through a year when the stock market crashed - and the recovery proved to be painfully slow - with only a modest dip in pre-tax profits from £23.3 million to £23 million for the 12 months to September 30.

Mr Paddy Linaker, M&G's managing director, says, all things considered, the outcome is a creditable performance, even though the 1988 result mars the group's performance in the five years to 1987 when group earnings grew at a compound 44 per cent. M&G is raising its final

dividend from 4p to 5p a share, making 8.5p (7p) for the year and saw its shares advance by 7p to 268p.

The net asset value at September 30 slipped to 89.8p a share compared with 90.3p a year earlier.

Highlights of the year included a 6 per cent increase in the number of unitholder accounts to 402,000 and a rise - against the general trend - of 9.6 per cent in management fees generated from invested funds.

Sales of units, at £385 million, down 29 per cent on the previous record year, were still the second highest in

group history. Funds managed by stood at £5.68 billion at September 30 compared with £6.79 billion. Since the year-end, Mr Alan Bond has sold his 13.44 per cent holding in M&G, a sale which Mr Linaker said made him feel delighted.

The costs of conforming to the Financial Services Act are estimated at £1.5 million (settling down to £500,000 on an annual basis) and in his review, Mr Andrew Caldecott, the chairman, questions whether in the wake of the Financial Services Act the investor is any better protected than he was before.

## Inflation seems certain to top 7% next month

By David Smith, Economics Correspondent

Britain's inflation rate held steady at 6.4 per cent last month. Department of Employment figures showed. But the rate seems certain to top 7 per cent next month, and possibly reach 7.5 per cent.

Separate figures for the public sector borrowing requirement showed that the Government was in surplus by £206 million last month, and is on course for a £12-14 billion public sector debt repayment for the full financial year.

The index of retail prices rose from 109.9 (January 1987=100) in October to 110.0 in November, a rise on the month of 0.5 per cent.

This matched the monthly increase in November last

year, and so the rate of inflation was unchanged at 6.4 per cent. But the corresponding monthly changes in December and January a year ago, minus 0.1 per cent and zero respectively, mean that it will be virtually impossible to avoid a rise in the inflation rate to more than 7 per cent, even without another rise in mortgage rates.

The Treasury conceded that its autumn statement forecast of 6.25 per cent average inflation for the fourth quarter of this year was now likely to be exceeded, and it raised the forecast to 6.5 per cent.

"The inflation trend is stronger at 0.5 per cent a month, and inflation will probably reach 7 per cent for

December, and certainly top 7 per cent in January," said Mr Nigel Richardson, economist at Warburg Securities.

The rise last month was due to higher home insurance premiums and the residual effects of the October mortgage rate rise; increases in meat and canned vegetable prices, and smaller contributions from a range of sources. If mortgage rates rise next year in line with the latest, November 25, base rate rise, then the inflation rate could reach 8 per cent in the spring.

The PSBR, negative by £206 million last month, produced a cumulative debt repayment for the first eight months of the financial year of £6.2 billion (£800 million).

## Two extra years for KIO to cut BP stake

By Our City Staff

The Kuwait Investment Office has been given an extra two years to reduce its shareholding in BP, Lord Young of Graffham, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, announced yesterday.

The reduction in the KIO stake in BP from 21.6 per cent to 9.9 per cent, ordered by the Government following a report by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in October, can now take place over three years, rather than the original period of one year.

The KIO is being required by the Department of Trade and Industry to limit its voting rights in BP to 9.9 per cent during the reduction of its stake.

The announcement, by removing the prospect of a sudden disposal of BP shares by the KIO, boosted the BP share price. Last night it was up 2p at 259p.

There is speculation that BP could buy in some of its own shares on the proceeds of the sale of its minerals business to RTZ, currently being negotiated.

The three-year period in which the KIO is allowed to reduce its BP stake to 9.9 per cent will run to October 1991 - three years from the publication of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report.

## Ivory shares stable despite 22% slide

By Our City Staff

Ivory & Sime, the Edinburgh fund management group, in which Japan's Sumitomo Life has a 14.2 per cent stake, is maintaining its interim dividend at 1.25p a share despite a 22 per cent fall in pre-tax profits for the six months ended October 31 from £1.99 million to £1.54 million.

The setback was not unexpected in the aftermath of the 1987 stock market crash, and the shares were unchanged at 128p.

At the trading level, profits

fell from £2.05 million to £859,000, but a jump in interest received (up from £67,000 to £810,000) helped arrest the decline at the pre-tax line.

Ivory & Sime has set up a joint venture with Pembroke Management in Canada.

Turnover was 6 per cent lower at £4.32 million, while costs - reflecting internal expansion and the requirements of securities industry compliance - rose from £2.59 million to £3.6 million.

## Denmark may sell air stake

The Danish government is considering selling part of its two-sevenths stake in SAS, the Scandinavian airline, as well as privatizing Copenhagen international airport, one of the three main SAS hubs.

The plan was unveiled a day after SAS announced that it was buying a 25 per cent stake in Airlines of Britain, the owner of British Midland, for £25 million and developing a consortium which could challenge British Airways, operating from London's Heathrow. Bishop's move, page 18

## Distillers trial put off

By Our City Staff

Legal proceedings against Mr Ernest Saunders, the former Guinness chief executive, and others facing fraud charges connected with the Distillers takeover, have been adjourned until the New Year.

Mr Justice Henry, sitting at Southwark Crown Court, south London, granted Mr Saunders's barrister, Mr Anthony Shaw, a two-month adjournment to study evidence with an option to apply for a further month if necessary.

Accused with Mr Saunders, aged 51, are Mr Gerald Ronson, chairman of the Heron Corporation; financier, Sir Jack Lyons; Mr Roger Seelig, former Morgan Grenfell corporate finance director; Lord Spens, former head of corporate finance at the Henry Ansbacher Merchant Bank; Mr Anthony Parnes, former stockbroker, and Mr David Mayhew, senior corporate finance partner of Cazenove and Co.

## Plessey bid 'benefits' outlined

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

A successful bid for Plessey, the electronics company, by General Electric Company and Siemens of West Germany could have a "highly beneficial" effect on Europe.

This was argued in the High Court yesterday, when the case continued in which Plessey is seeking an injunction to halt the hostile bid until it has been vetted by the European Commission in Brussels. Plessey claims agreements between the joint bidders would distort competition within the European Economic Community.

A decision on the case is expected on Monday, and whichever side loses it is expected to go to the Court of Appeal on Tuesday.

Mr Jonathan Sumption QC, for GEC and Siemens, maintained that the bid does not infringe European anti-competition laws. He told Mr Justice Morritt that there was binding legal authority to back his contention that the mere acquisition of Plessey shares by the joint bidders was not contrary to EEC anti-competition laws.

Any proposed restructuring of Ples-

sey's operations would not, in any event, come into effect until some time after any takeover, Mr Sumption said. Only a general approach had been agreed and there was nothing in the proposals about sharing out markets or excluding any participants in the proposed new group from any field of research.

"There is nothing in the agreement about any concerted anti-competition practice," Mr Sumption said.

GEC and Siemens believed the effect of the proposals would be to increase competition at present limited by the size and national base of the participants, he said. The combination of research resources in this field was potentially "highly beneficial to the European community."

Mr Sumption further argued that since none of the restructuring proposals was imminent the injunction sought by Plessey could not be justified.

The only people who could possibly be financially damaged and therefore have a cause of action would be Plessey's shareholders. Mr Sumption said damage to Plessey claimed by the company was "outstandingly vague." It amounted to a

complaint about the uncertainty surrounding the bid, and uncertainty was involved in any bidding process for a company. The point of Article 85 of the Treaty of Rome was to prevent damage to companies from distortions of competition - not damage arising from a hostile takeover bid.

If the British courts find for GEC and Siemens there is still a possibility the GEC-Siemens bid might be blocked because the Commission could under its "interim measures" powers halt the bid from proceeding further until the Commission comes to a decision.

There might also be another legal option which could be pursued. It is unlikely in this type of case that leave of appeal would be given to take the present case to the House of Lords. But lawyers in the Plessey camp are also understood to be considering whether an appeal could be made to the European Court, even though there is no precedent for this.

Lawyers expect that if the British court decision went one way and the Commission's judgment another the case would have to go to the European Court.

## Mystery bid for Avdel rejected

By Wolfgang Munchau

Banner Industries, the US engineering group, has rejected an anonymous £125 million counterbid for Avdel, the industrial fastening systems producer.

The surprise bid, which tops Banner's own, unwelcome offer by about £6 million, is thought unlikely to succeed because it is conditional on acceptance by Banner, which owns 43 per cent of the Avdel equity.

The rival offer, which follows Avdel's revelation earlier this week that it was holding talks with a third party, was unveiled by Schroders, the merchant bank, on behalf of a client which, in a highly unusual development, preferred to remain anonymous.

It is worth 92p in cash, against Banner's hostile 88p offer, and is being recommended by the Avdel board.

There was an immediate and angry response from Mr David Hudson of Henry Ansbacher & Co, Banner's British merchant bank.

He said: "We will not accept the offer. We believe this is purely a delaying tactic. The reason the buyer has decided not to reveal his identity is that he knows full well that he is not going to win."

"We are not in this for the short term. We still want to build the world's largest fastening systems group."

It is, however, thought possible, although unlikely, that the anonymous bidder may waive the acceptance condition or even launch a new offer.

The market seemed to discount the chances of success for the counterbid and the shares remained steady at 88p.

One City analyst pointed out that it was very unusual for a bidder not to reveal his identity "and this suggests to me that Avdel has not been able to wrap it all up."

It was also argued that Avdel would not be in an enviable position even if it won, with a hostile party accounting for just under half its shares.

Avdel, however, said its main institutional shareholders, including M&G Investment Management, 3i Group, GT Management and Prolific Unit Trust Management, which together speak for 34.77 per cent of the Avdel shares, welcomed the new mystery bidder.

Mr Tom Howe, of Schroders, speaking on behalf of the anonymous buyer, said he was taking Banner's announcement into account, although he dismissed it as only an initial response.

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# Bishop's move puts King in check

## The surprise link-up between SAS and Michael Bishop's British Midland airline presents a major challenge to Lord King's British Airways

The news that SAS, the Scandinavian airline, had taken a 24.9 per cent stake in British Midland burst like a stun grenade in the Heathrow headquarters of Lord King's British Airways. "It's terrible. They've pulled it off from under our noses right here in our own backyard," one senior executive wailed to anyone who would listen.

In retrospect it was all so obvious, even though for at least six months the men at the top of BA had missed the warning signs.

"What is Michael Bishop up to?" had been one of the most common questions whenever airline chiefs gathered together. Sir Colin Marshall, BA's chief executive, had given warning more than two years ago that the days of the medium-sized airline were numbered. To survive, he predicted, you would either have to be very big or very small.

Michael Bishop, the quiet but dynamic 46-year-old head of one of the most successful independent airlines in Europe, was certainly able to see the way the wind was blowing.

His airline had grown steadily until it was trapped in that middle ground - too big to fill the vital niches by providing commuter services and too small to have the muscle to buy aircraft, fuel, engineering and the range of

other airline services at a cut price and so force down costs.

At the same time Jan Carlzon, president of SAS, had made no secret of his intention of keeping his airline in the big league. He believes strongly that by the mid-1990s there will be only five or six big airlines left in Europe - and he wanted to be one of them.

His aggressive bid for a stake in British Caledonian showed that his main target was Britain. If he could build up a hub in London he would pull the centre of gravity of his airline further towards the centre of Europe.

Being on the fringes of the community severely limited his potential for growth. There just were not enough Scandinavians to boost his passenger figures and justify the investment which was going to be necessary in the future and not enough Europeans, Americans and Japanese wanting to fly to

Scandinavia. Somehow he had to become involved in the heart of the continent.

Through his tie up with British Midland both airlines have achieved exactly what they want. British Midland, now part of the Airlines of Britain Group, will for the first time have a partner with the cash and the power to buy the latest aircraft, to provide the equipment for expansion at the cheapest possible price and, perhaps more importantly, get them when they want them.

The main driving force behind the link-up, however, was the chance of competing with British Airways from Heathrow.

British Midland has carefully built up a store of vital take-off and landing "slots" from Heathrow and is applying for licences to fly to a further 11 European destinations. So far the canny Mr

Bishop has refused to say which of these he will take up first, provided he gets them all, arguing that he wanted to prevent his rivals from mounting a counter strike. In reality he was waiting until the deal with SAS could be finalized.

Now, he has his own slots to put into the pot and those of SAS. Together they already have about 40 a day out of Heathrow and with some spare capacity still existing at the most important international airport in Europe it is more than enough to enable him, with SAS backing, to plan the leap into intercontinental long haul operations.

Until now Mr Bishop has fought shy of such a move because of the huge investment which would be necessary in the right aircraft and because a newcomer on the busy Far East and American

routes would be swamped by the mega carriers.

Now, with SAS resources behind him and access to the enormous marketing network built up by the Scandinavian airline with its links around the globe, he feels the time has come to be able to make the new services work.

The two airlines are out alone in their desire to forge links which will open up new opportunities.

British Airways wants a stake in Air New Zealand to give it a foothold in the Far Eastern and Pacific markets, Lufthansa is buying into Spain to create a new jointly owned charter airline, Air France has formed a joint venture with Lufthansa to operate into Berlin, Alitalia is scouring the world for new partners, KLM already owns 15 per cent of Air UK and Harry Goodman's Air Europe is on the way to creating the first genuine pan-European airline by setting up charter subsidiaries in Norway, Italy, France and Germany. Airlines of Europe, as Mr Goodman's new consortium will be known, should be in place by next month.

This week's acceptance by the CAA that 24.9 per cent is an acceptable level of foreign investment and fulfils the vague qualification of leaving the airline "substantially" in British hands will clear much of the confusion surrounding

mergers and international takeovers and could lead to KLM increasing its stake in Air UK.

All eyes are turned towards Dan Air. The British carrier is now isolated in size and shape with its budding scheduled services into Europe from Gatwick and must be a prime target for foreign investors. The airline clearly needs to rationalize its fleet and buy new equipment urgently and to do so may be tempted to form a link with a richer, larger European carrier.

The Belgian national airline Sabena is also top of the big airlines' "hit list".

British Airways could be interested. But for the moment it has to devise a way of combating the new threat which has emerged at its own hub airport. After 1992 British Airways knows it may face even more challenges from European airlines and it had hoped that by then there would be so few slots available at Heathrow that any such competitor would have to be based in Stansted.

Now it knows it has been upstaged and out-smarted by the two men most likely to succeed in what is inevitably going to be a decade of cathartic change for the airline industry.

Harvey Elliot

## Citicorp's Tokyo securities house to be reorganized

Tokyo (Reuter) - Citicorp Scrimgeour Vickers International, which is part of Citicorp, is to eliminate fundamental research as well as institutional and equity sales in Japan and focus on computerized portfolio management in the highly competitive securities market.

Mr Masatoshi Yasuda, general manager and director of Citicorp's Tokyo investment banking unit, said that 34 people will leave their posts but no one will be laid off.

He said: "We are trimming the activities to improve quality. The structure of our research department is too expensive."

Citicorp Scrimgeour Vic-

kers International will set up a new research unit to offer highly sophisticated computer packages for portfolio development and management.

Research was important when clients were largely European.

But now the way to make progress in the competitive Tokyo securities market was to introduce new products for Japanese fund managers. Mr Yasuda explained.

Citicorp Scrimgeour Vickers employs 180 in Tokyo. The 25-member research team will be dismantled and the five-member international sales team and the four-member foreign equity sales team will be redeployed.

## French to sell Mrs Fields products

Paris (NY Times) - Rather than invest further in its European operations, the troubled American cookie maker Mrs Fields' Inc. has licensed the French food concern Midial to sell and distribute its products throughout the EEC.

Midial has agreed to pay \$5 million (\$2.74 million) to sell Mrs Fields products.

It has paid another \$5 million to sell those of La Petite Boulangerie, the bakery chain. It will also buy the four Mrs Fields cookie stores in London at a price which has not yet been negotiated.

Midial, a family-owned private company headed by M. Philippe Midi, has restructured recently.

It has sold 49 per cent of its Banania food brand to the General Foods Corporation and has disposed of its best-known chocolate brand, Poulain, for \$158 million, to Cadbury Schweppes.

Mrs Fields, whose president and chief executive is Mrs Debbi Fields, reported a loss of \$17.7 million, on sales of \$118 million.



Mrs Fields: loss of \$15 million on June 30 of \$15 million, on sales of \$60 million, after closing unprofitable stores in the US. In 1987, it reported earnings of \$17.7 million, on sales of \$118 million.

## Thorn to sort out EEC pay problem

By A Correspondent

The Government has called in Thorn EMI to tackle a computer crisis which created a £200 million backlog in payments to British food manufacturers.

A contract has been awarded to Thorn's software sciences subsidiary after the failure of a system intended to administer refunds to food exporters under the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy.

But food exporters remain deeply concerned about the backlog in payments which has been growing for the past year.

The situation has not improved for exporters of processed foods despite government assurances that the backlog is being steadily reduced, they said yesterday.

The problem centres on the Intervention Board for Agricultural Produce, which pays refunds to British food exporters to compensate for high EEC commodity prices compared to those on world markets.

Computer specialists sec-

onded to the intervention board from the Ministry of Agriculture spent four years developing a system to administer the refunds. But their £4-million project could not handle revised procedures introduced by the EEC in January.

Last month, the intervention board decided to abandon the system and call in the private sector to develop a replacement.

The decision followed a critical report submitted in the summer by consultants from Touche Ross, the accountants. The backlog in payments has caused serious problems, particularly for small firms. But large companies like Rowntree Mackintosh have also been affected.

At one time during the year, Rowntree estimated it was owed £2.7 million in unpaid refunds.

"We are not satisfied with the government action so far," said Mr Brian Lawson of the Biscuit, Cake, Chocolate and Confectionery Alliance.



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The sale of Sears' William Hill to GrandMet contrasts two different management strategies

# World leader versus a closer focus

Even by the standards of Mr Allen Sheppard, the restless chairman of Grand Metropolitan, this has been a busy week. It began with a trip to New York, where he splashed out \$300 million (£164.83 million) raising his bid for Pillsbury, the US food company, to almost \$5.5 billion. Back in London with little but jet lag to show for a series of negotiations with Mr Philip Smith who runs Pillsbury, he was far too busy to sit back. Passing only to take delivery of the \$2 billion proceeds from the sale of Intercontinental Hotels, and cast an eye over the latest legal moves to unscramble Pillsbury's poison pill defence, he moved on to the latest in a relentless series of

deals, the \$331 million purchase of William Hill the bookmaker, from Sears. The William Hill deal is straight out of the new GrandMet textbook that Mr Sheppard spent a good deal of time devising. He and his board simply wish to be world leaders in food, drinks and retailing. Mecca was always dominated by Ladbroke, its much larger rival. Putting Mecca and William Hill side by side makes them joint leader in terms of retail betting outlets, though in market share Ladbroke still has a good margin to spare. The buzz phrase at GrandMet these days is "critical mass." Its strategy in the past year has been to part with those parts of its empire that were either not capable of expansion into a leading position in their markets or would, like Intercontinental Hotels, have required a great deal of cash.

The sale of the hotels chain at a high price shrank the core operations from four to three and allowed the group cash resources and management time to concentrate its efforts. The bid for Pillsbury is the classic illustration of the new "critical mass" policy. Mr Sheppard believes that just as the drinks business became increasingly focused on the development of global brands in the past 10 years, so will the food industry in the next decade.

Pillsbury was unusually, both the kind of company that would help GrandMet along the path to a leading position in the US food industry, and available too. Most of the agencies at the US group stemmed from the dismal and seemingly intractable problems at its Burger King subsidiary, second only in the fast food market to McDonalds. But the group sales of \$6 billion and leading shares of the food manufacturing and retailing market are fertile ground for Mr Sheppard. Its brands include Green Giant vegetables, Pillsbury chilled dough and Haagen-Dazs ice cream.



Maitland Smith: bid stories

Back in Britain, GrandMet failed with its efforts to prise away the leading Irish whiskey brands from Pernod. They too matched the Sheppard specification every inch, being capable of vastly greater sales in the US. Betting too is a recovery situation these days since the relaxation of rules which forced retail shops to offer no more than a spartan interior to customers. Where the William Hill deal will lead depends to a large extent on the response from Mr Cyril Stein, Ladbroke's fiercely competitive chief. But like Ladbroke, Mr Sheppard now has a division which he can expand at home and overseas.

John Bell

The chairman of Sears, Mr Geoffrey Maitland Smith, sent a cheque for \$331 million to the bank yesterday, and allowed himself a smile of self-congratulation. By the time the Sears accounts are ruled off at the end of January, the cheque will have earned nearly £5 million in interest. The market was not slow to assess the impact of the sale of the William Hill betting chain, and Sears shares, dragged down by the malaise of the retail sector, perked up in minutes from 109p to 115p. This weekend, Mr Maitland Smith expects to see another round of Sears bid stories, but in the meantime he is in the final stages of focusing the wide empire he inherited. Until 12.50pm yesterday, Sears had two important business outside retailing — betting and housebuilding. Betting has now gone, leaving only housebuilding (and an interest in Satellite Information Systems) to go before it becomes a "pure" retailer. The impact of the William Hill sale on Sears is entirely positive. On the balance sheet, Sears has exchanged £8 million of net assets for £331 million of cash, a deal which is a good Friday morning's work for anybody. There will be an extraordinary profit of £310 million after expenses. Financial gearing, which would have been about 42 per cent at the year-end, will be only 7 per cent. Net assets per share, as stated in Sears doggedly conservative balance sheet, rise by 34 per cent to 87p. Sears does not value brands, goodwill or licenses: if it did, assets would be well above its share price. On the profit and loss account, the impact is equally favourable. Out go annual profits of £20 million from betting. In comes £40 million of annual interest on the cash. But even more important, the deal improves the quality of Sears' earnings beyond measure. Profits from betting are not regarded as high quality by the market: they are volatile, unpredictable and could disappear overnight if the authorities so decide.

William Hill has been losing market share, especially to Ladbroke, which is now almost as single-minded about betting as Sears is about retailing. It is no coincidence, either, that they both have property as a solid second string, much of Ladbroke's being in the form of hotels. The market is asking, inevitably, what will happen at Sears after the retrenchment, when both betting and housebuilding (which also has low market esteem and earnings judged to be poor quality) are gone and has come to the conclusion that Mr Maitland Smith will want to expand. The events of a week ago when Mr George Davies and his wife Liz were kicked off the board of Next, have set the rumour machine in motion, and even before the sale of William Hill, Sears was earmarked as a possible bidder. Takeover bids are out now to Mr Maitland Smith, who a year ago was in the midst of acquiring Freemans, the mail order group. They are, or at least were, an integral part of the Sears culture under Mr Charles Clore, the legendary takeover expert. Mr Maitland Smith is, of course, non-committal about whether he has Next in his sights. "We look at them all," he said. "But outsiders look at the situation and say, good heavens, look at the fit."

David Brewerton

## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

### Bridport shares drop on profits collapse

A collapse in profits has hit the shares of Bridport-Gundry, the Dorset fishing and military nets producer. Pre-tax profits fell from £2.24 million to £870,000 for the year to July 31, despite an increase in turnover from £37.94 million to £38.67 million. The shares fell 25p to 200p on the news, but recovered to 203p.

The profits drop came from an extraordinary item of £1.698 million relating to losses and possible closure costs at Brownell, the defence-related subsidiary. Earnings per share fell from 13.47p to 5.76p. The final dividend is 5.1p, making 7p, unchanged from last year.

### Forminster figures fall

Forminster, the clothing manufacturer, reported a drop in pre-tax profits from £843,000 to £783,000 on turnover down from £10 million to £8.55 million for the six months to October 31. The interim dividend was raised from 2.5p to 2.75p though earnings per share slipped from 14.79p to 14.05p. The chairman said he expected satisfactory results for the whole year.

### Cifer deal for Scorpion

Cifer, the troubled USM-quoted manufacturer of computers and terminals, is buying Scorpion, a computer software house specializing in accounting applications, for £260,000, including debts. The deal will be financed through the issue of 2.3 million shares. Scorpion made pre-tax profits of £13,600 on turnover of £72,000 for the six months to end-March.

### Reliance interim slips

Reliance Security Group saw pre-tax profits dip from £884,000 to £772,000 in the six months to October 5, and earnings slipped from 5.6p to 4.9p a share. The interim dividend is pegged at 1.5p.

The board says the company's core business has strong counter-cyclical qualities, but it is well placed to move forward to increased profitability in that business. Investment in building up national coverage continues and the Leeds office is making good progress with start-up losses contained within budget. Development in Scotland has progressed satisfactorily and the company anticipates opening there in the new financial year, completing the first phase of its nationwide development programme.

### Wellman up to £1.26m

Wellman, the ovens, furnace and heating elements group, lifted pre-tax profits from £707,000 to £1.26 million, with earnings per share up from 1.65p to 2.83p, in the six months to September 30. But the group gave a warning that earnings growth may be held back as a result of some recent disposals. The shares rose 0.5p to 43p.

### \$6m buy for Amer Group

Amer Group, the Finnish consumer goods company, is paying \$6 million (£3.29 million) for the acquisition of Century Paper, a Boston wholesaler of graphic paper. The deal was made through Amer's Chicago-based Hobart/McIntosh paper subsidiary. Century employs 37 people and had net sales of \$21 million last year.

### C&W in \$4m venture with Thai companies

A joint venture to provide state of the art digital telecommunications services throughout Thailand has been formed by Cable and Wireless and two Thai organizations, Sophonpanich and Sritrifueng. The new company has been awarded a licence to provide domestic data communications services by satellite for 15 years and will be capitalized at \$4 million, with further investment being planned for network development. C&W will have 40 per cent and the two Thai groups 30 per cent each.

### Japan-Soviet links improve

Tokyo (AP) — The Blakiston fish owl and golden eagle may have unwittingly made a big contribution to Japanese-Soviet relations. The Japanese Government has now ratified a long overdue pact with the Soviet Union on protection of 287 species of migratory birds, and Tokyo hopes the accord will eventually help the two nations resolve their territorial dispute. The Soviet and Japanese Foreign Ministers plan to exchange ratification documents on the treaty next week.

### Bond sells television station for £45m

Perth (Reuters) — Bond Media, Bond Corp's 52 per cent owned subsidiary, is to sell its STW-9 television station in Perth to Sunraysia Television for Aus\$95 million (£44.8 million). It will also sell nine radio stations to a new company in which it will have a 14.9 per cent stake, it said.

Both moves were forced by the Australian government's cross-media regulations, aimed at preventing a single group holding television, radio and newspapers in any one centre. The Bond group acquired a Perth newspaper when it gained control of the Bell Group and owns the National Nine TV network.

Sunraysia will sell the STW-8 television station in the city of Mikkura in north-western Victoria to Bond Media for Aus\$18 million. STW-9 will retain links with the National Nine network.

The proceeds of the sale of STW-8 will be incorporated in Sunraysia's initial payment of Aus\$55 million to Bond Media. The rest will be paid in five annual tranches. Both sales are effective from January 31.

Bond Media said the radio stations, in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Darwin and Western Australian regional centres, will be sold to a new company, John Laws Radio.

Mr John Laws, a Sydney radio presenter, will be chairman of John Laws Radio and will have a 14.9 per cent stake. The remaining 70.2 per cent is expected to be floated on the Australian market.

No sale price for the radio stations was given.



Von Cramer marries

Mr Gary von Cramer, the businessman charged in connection with the Barlow Clowes collapse, and Miss Deborah Lewis (above) after their wedding at Micklethwaite Methodist Church, near Bradford yesterday.

### Re-start of Tartan oil production delayed

The North Sea Tartan oil field, shut down since a blast wrecked the Piper Alpha platform on July 7, may not restart production at the end of this year as hoped, according to the owners and operators Texaco Inc. Tartan oil is pumped to the UK mainland via the Occidental Petroleum Corp operated Claymore field which was also shut down after the Piper Alpha explosion. But preparatory work for re-start-

### Cash-rich Hanson seeking takeovers

Hanson's cash, which had reached £3.8 billion at the year-end of September 30 — compared with £2.98 billion the year before — now exceeds borrowings by more than £1 billion.

Lord Hanson, the chairman, said in the annual report, published yesterday, that the industrial conglomerate will use it for acquisitions. He told shareholders: "When we judge the time to be right, we shall resume growth by acquisition, including use of our substantial cash resources."

He pointed out that after the Kiddy acquisition last year, the industrial conglomerate was 60 per cent geared but now there is no gearing.

He said: "We shall continue to generate organic growth within our widely-diversified companies and maintain the positive cash flow achieved in recent years."

He added: "While looking constantly with great selectivity at further possible acquisitions, our existing businesses continue to grow. We look forward with unbounded enthusiasm to the years ahead."

Sir Gordon White, the chairman of Hanson Industries, the American offshoot, said that it was well placed to grasp expansion opportunities — both in terms of capital investment in existing businesses and through acquisitions. However, he gave a warning. "In view of the high prices being paid for companies, we shall continue to exercise great care and selectivity in any purchase."

### Shopfitter soars 100% to £1.4m

By Rosemary Unsworth

Campbell & Armstrong, the USM-quoted shopfitter, has doubled profits in the first half while turnover increased by more than four times.

The acquisition-orientated group, chaired by Professor Roland Smith, made pre-tax profits of £1.4 million compared with £719,000 in the six months to September 30.

Turnover advanced from £5.59 million to £23.8 million and the interim dividend has been increased by 10 per cent from 1.5p to 1.65p. Interest charges were £139,000 compared with £28,000.

Campbell is continuing to expand and is buying ESL, a quality Wimbleton shop fitter, for £2.85 million to expand its presence in the South of England. Payment is through the issue of 1.4 million shares of which the vendors will retain 738,000 and the rest will be placed at 195p each. Last year ESL made £344,000 on turnover of £4.38 million.

Professor Roland Smith said: "Despite the more difficult economic climate all our business and our manufacturing units are busy at this time. The spread of business between office, bank and retail shopfitting makes us less dependent on any one sector."

### Boot sells off rail division

Henry Boot & Sons, the Sheffield construction and property development group, is selling its rail engineering business, including its Thomas Ward subsidiary, to BICC's Balfour Beatty in a cash deal initially worth £1.5 million. A freehold property option could later generate about £2 million more, while Boot expects to release further cash following the disposal, adding up to a total cash benefit to the company of about £5 million. Balfour Beatty, which makes rail electrification equipment and is involved in British Rail's East Coast main line electrification, sees the Boot business, which produces and lays rail tracks, as being complementary to its own.

### Substitution fears unsettle metals market

## Platinum plunges to \$522 on Ford research report

By Colin Campbell

The free market platinum price plunged further in nervous trading in world markets yesterday on fears of reduced demand from car manufacturers for use in exhaust autocatalysts.

Ford, a leading customer of Johnson Matthey, the precious metals group, says it has been working on the development of a non-platinum automobile exhaust catalyst for some time. The announcement took the platinum market and investors by surprise, and led to an immediate re-rating of all associated platinum shares.

Analysis fear that if experiments proved successful and economic, then one of the main demand factors which have traditionally supported platinum and its price will be removed.

A successful application by Ford of the cheaper palladium (a member of the platinum family) would lead other world car manufacturers to follow suit, and would encourage other users of platinum to step up their research efforts on substitution.

Platinum futures prices in New York fell by their \$25-limit to \$579.50 an ounce on Thursday following the Ford statement, with a further \$25 fall yesterday.

Prices in London were additionally weaker with the

precious metal at \$522 an ounce in afternoon trading. Technical factors could see further price falls on Monday, according to traders.

Johnson Matthey admitted that it had been collaborating with Ford in its research for some time, but sought to calm the market by adding that overall demand for platinum from all other sources remained strong.

Mr Eugene Anderson, Johnson Matthey's chief executive, said the company's recent interim review of the platinum market took into account the Ford developments, and its view of the supply-demand fundamentals for the short and medium term remain unchanged.

"In the long term, the rapidly advancing European market coupled with the expected tightening of US emission standards and a greater durability requirement, will ensure a continuing strong demand for platinum," Mr Anderson said.

Of an estimated 1988 Western world platinum demand of 3.615 million ounces, up from 1987's demand of 3.29 million ounces, the autocatalyst sector is forecast to account for a net 1.145 million ounces, or 32 per cent.

Demand for jewellery usage, traditionally the second largest category, is forecast at

1.2 million ounces, or 33 per cent, and though this sector of the market is expected to remain strong — as are other end-users of platinum — sentiment and profitability would none the less be seriously dented.

The world's leading suppliers of platinum group metals are South Africa and Russia. But while platinum is mined and refined in association with palladium and other associated metals, South African mines produce the family of three platinum to one third palladium. In Russia, the relationship is two thirds palladium to one third platinum.

Any significant preference for palladium, rather than platinum, in autocatalysts would thus have a serious impact on the profitability of South African mining operations. By contrast, Russian operations would benefit.

The demand for platinum group metals and their growth prospects have encouraged increased exploration of South African deposits.

Consolidated Gold Fields through its South African associate, GFSA, is developing the new Northern Platinum Mine, Lornito, the international trading conglomerate, has South African platinum interests through Western Platinum.

## The scent of bears and distant spring

It is not exactly a Merry Christmas in the stock market. A heavy scent of bearishness hangs in the air which is infected also by sackings and the woes of brokers and market-makers starved of business. Analysis nibble at any scraps of statistical information that suggest the Treasury may be regaining some control over inflation.

The Chancellor's own stock has dropped; he is visibly shaken by the turn of events; and he is not expected to be at the Treasury much beyond next year's Budget. That does not mean necessarily that his policy of high interest rates and a strong pound will not bring inflation down. The question is at what cost to industry, employment and profitability — and



Kenneth Fleet

to the Government's standing and his own reputation as an Exchequer wizard, breathtakingly pulling rapid growth and lower taxes out of his red despatch box.

The spending public, with yet higher mortgage rates to come in the new year, may already be drawing in its horns (the November retail sales figures recorded an actual fall) and as

employers feel the pressures and employees the uncertainties talk of extravagant pay settlements pushing prices much higher than forecast is too pessimistic. But if the latest retail and earnings figures (a slight fall in October to 9 per cent in the rate at which average earnings are rising) prove misleading, then interest rates will presumably be turned higher. Interest rates are edging up in the US and elsewhere in Europe — a trend it is difficult for us not to follow if the pound is to remain strong.

As I have stressed before, high interest rates, which mean easy money for no risk, do not make for a climate in which ordinary shares flourish. Chartists sum it up neatly in figures.

The technical trio at James Capel believes that no rally (in the FT-SE 100 index) would take the market much above 1,820. A decisive break below 1,720, which might come after the next rally into the 1,800s, would signal the second leg of the bear market. The pit might be avoided, but if not, the level from which the next bull market would begin is 1,440-1,515, "or more likely 1,228" — 50 per cent from the all-time high.

Not much seasonal cheer here! But whether these projections are right or wrong I think it would be foolish to expect the trend of prices to turn up before the spring since that is the earliest we can look for unambiguously lower interest rates. That, and a firm Wall Street, is the key.

## GUS and Hanson display defensive armour

There is always (well, almost always) a case for defensive stocks. They are a useful insurance against clever chaps who forecast the level of the market and get it wrong! A defensive stock should offer a good yield, stand on a sound price-earnings ratio and have the backing of a strong balance sheet. The company will be largely in sound, solidly performing businesses, not fly-by-night enterprises.

Currently I am impressed with two, one for each leg of the stocking, with these excellent qualities: Great Universal Stores (the A shares at 923p yield 4.2 per cent and have a p/e ratio of 8.9) and Hanson (1.49p, yielding 6.1 per cent and on a p/e of 8.8).

GUS is not the exciting acquirer it was in the hey-day of Sir Isaac Wolfson. Nor does it have the high profile it did in earlier days. It is run prudently and without song and dance by his son Leonard (Lord Wolfson) who has given GUS a tauter shape and

brought skilfully to the fore those activities in which he himself excels — finance and property.

The leader in mail order, the group still derives the bulk of its profits from retailing. In the first half of the current year mail order was hit by the postal strike but the gathering strength of other divisions shone through. Post-tax profits from financial services and investment income rose by 13 per cent to £24.8 million and from property by 19 per cent to £12.8 million. With 1,300 freehold and 130 long leasehold properties GUS has one of the outstanding shop and office portfolios in the property business. Burberrys too is an expanding operation, chipping in an extra 10 per cent at £7.4 million.

Net tangible assets are worth about £10 a share and GUS is not short of cash. But its special quality in uncertain times (they could hardly be more uncertain in retailing, witness

the fortunes of Next and the fate of George Davies) — at the hand incidentally of a former GUS mail order man, David Jones) is its ability to anticipate problems and produce figures others covet. Earnings will increase in 1988-89 and in the year after.

The other point in GUS's favour is the board's determination to buy in up to 15 per cent of the A shares and to repay the B and C preference stocks. This scheme is coming up for a third time, at an extraordinary general meeting. It could not happen at a better time.

Whereas GUS hides its light under a bushel — it has rare dealings with analysts and is not pro-active with the media — Hanson is one of our best-known, and now most admired, companies. It is also the arch acquirer and the feeling is that Lord Hanson and Sir Gordon White have in mind one more mega acquisition

for which they are currently putting together the financial fire-power. To make a significant impact on earnings they have to buy big. They are also of course astute sellers of businesses, on both sides of the Atlantic.

Hanson is not recession proof but it is financially strong and superbly directed. It produces the goods, takes care of shareholders' interests and it is never dull.

### Lord Boardman

In my piece last week I criticized NatWest and its chairman, Lord Boardman. I referred to him as a "caretaker chairman." I now understand from him that his appointment in 1983 was expected to be for at least five years. I am sorry if this has caused him any embarrassment and accept that during his period of chairmanship NatWest has become the most profitable bank in the UK.

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STOCK MARKET

Christmas rally under way as fear of interest rate rise eases

The traditional pre-Christmas rally, which many people thought had gone begging this year...

The growing belief that the Government will not have to increase interest rates further to slow down inflationary pressures...

Market-makers were happy to mark prices up at the outset in an effort to drum up some much-needed interest and, although investors' response was slow...

One dealer said: "It has been a long time coming, but it looks as though we could have a nice run-up to next week's British trade figures, due on Friday..."

An early gain on Wall Street made dealers even more cheerful after their seasonal lull...

The FT-SE 100 index stood 11.5 points up at 1,774.7 just after 3pm, while the narrower FT 30-share index was 8.5 points to the good at 1,435.8.

Glits moved up 2 1/2, encouraged by sterling's steady performance in the face of higher European interest rates.

George Wimpey, one of the largest housebuilders in Britain, provided the market with something to think about as the old story re-emerged that the Grove Charity Trust...

Still in the building sector, Walter Lawrence, the housebuilding and construction group, advanced 9p to 120p on revived speculative support.

Newarthill, the civil engineer and building contractor which trades as Sir Robert McAlpine, increased its stake in WL this year in a move many think was designed to help flush out another bidder for the company.



Building chief: Clifford Chetwood, of Wimpey

Some speculators now think that English China Clays has decided not to launch another bid for a rival housebuilder, Bryant Holdings, but to go for Walter Lawrence instead.

Stores picked themselves up off the floor on hopes of a last-minute consumer spending spree before Christmas.

Great Universal Stores, Britain's biggest mail order group, which disappointed the market last week by revealing interim profits below expectations at £162.9 million...

Another extraordinary general meeting has been called for January 6, to gain shareholders' approval to purchase up to 14.9 per cent of the A, or non-voting, shares.

However, dealers now believe that a European group - possibly a Dutch one which has been active in the British property market recently - has struck a deal with the Grove Charity Trust...

When questioned recently as to the likely price a buyer would have to pay for the trust's stake, analysts said that bids would probably have to start at about the 330p level - and would climb from there.

seems, including Japanese and Australian groups, while Taylor Woodrow and RTZ have also been put forward.

However, dealers now believe that a European group - possibly a Dutch one which has been active in the British property market recently - has struck a deal with the Grove Charity Trust...

Still in the building sector, Walter Lawrence, the housebuilding and construction group, advanced 9p to 120p on revived speculative support.

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The Grove Charity Trust reduced its holding from 49.9

Reports that Warburg Securities, the broker, has changed its stance on composite insurances from hold to buy because of the possibility of increased premiums in the US next year...

Analysis has recently been taken a more positive view of composites, citing high yields and takeover possibilities as 1992 approaches.

Commercial Union, the perennial takeover favourite, in which Mr John Spalvine's Adelaide Steamship owns a 7 per cent stake, rose 5p to 332p on a turnover of nearly 3 million shares.

There were also reports of an official ruling to raise motor premiums in Mass-

Enterprise advanced 11p to 547p and Lasmo 8.5p to 482p as the market speculated on an imminent £7.50-a-share offer for Enterprise from Arco, of the US. Word is that the Americans have agreed to buy Lasmo's 25.2 per cent stake and bid terms will be announced next week.

achusetts, where CU is a big player. Royal, which last month took the market by surprise by revealing a near 50 per cent drop in pre-tax profits in the first nine months of the year because of a £112 million provision to bolster its US outstanding claims reserves, recovered 5p to 386p. General Accident added 5p to 859p and Sun Alliance 11p to 962p.

Among the Lloyd's brokers, Sedgwick gained 5p to 224p. Transamerica holds a 39 per cent stake in the company and is free to bid from next August.

Willis Faber rose 7p to 224p. The group owns a 20 per cent stake in Morgan Grenfell, the beleaguered merchant bank, which recently shocked the City by withdrawing from market-making in securities, making 450 people redundant.

It is known to want to sell its Morgan Grenfell shares and, if stories circulating that a European bank is ready to bid for the leaner Morgan Grenfell prove correct, Willis Faber will obviously benefit.

Geoffrey Foster

Mr James Wilbur, an analyst at Smith Barney, said the sale of a stake in Conoco could benefit Du Pont by reducing its holdings in the slow-growing oil business.

Du Pont shares rose 2 points to 85 1/2. Seagram Co, Du Pont's largest shareholder with 23 per cent, rose 1 1/2 points to 60 1/2.

Mr Wilbur said Du Pont, which bought Conoco for \$6.8 billion (£3.75 billion) in 1981, could command \$12.5 billion for the whole unit, including \$10 billion for the oil and gas business and \$2 billion for coal.

Prices rebounded after fears for Emperor Hirohito ease

(AP-Dow Jones) - Prices regained most of the heavy losses suffered near the end of morning trading to close lower in moderate dealings. Traders and investors started buying as afternoon dealings got under way, having satisfied themselves during lunch that the reports that Emperor Hirohito was near death were not true.

The Nikkei index dropped more than 300 points in the final 20 minutes of the morning when the talk started. But the Bundesbank's decision to raise its Lombard rate and fears the US Federal Reserve

might lift its discount rate affected for shares sensitive to interest rates, such as utilities.

The Nikkei index of 225 selected issues, which had shed 413 points at its intra-day low at the end of the morning, rebounded during the afternoon to close at 29,536.71, down 169.04 points.

Declining issues outnumbered rising ones by more than two to one - 636 issues fell, 270 rose and 158 were unchanged.

The rise in the Lombard rate, the rate the West German central bank charges on secured short-term loans, coupled with fears that the US Federal Reserve might well follow the Bundesbank's move by lifting its discount rate, contributed to declines on Wall Street overnight.

Traders said the fears of higher interest rates reinforced the trend already evident on Thursday, of investors moving out of some of the large-capital issues which led the market's late-November rally and into some of the blue chips. Blue chips, which also got a boost from the firmer dollar, outperformed the market but closed only mixed to firmer.

NEW YORK

Dow edges ahead on firm bonds

(Reuters) - Wall Street shares showed moderate early gains related in part to the expiry of certain futures contracts, futures options and stock options. Mr Paul Cantor, a senior trader with Daiwa, said. Shares were also helped by firmness in US bond prices, other traders said.

Futures traders saw some light buy programmes as the session opened.

The Dow Jones industrial average was up 5.21 points at 2,138.21 and gaining issues held a slight lead over declining issues.

Du Pont Co shares rose after Mr Edgar Woodard, incoming chief executive, was quoted in a report as saying he would consider selling a large part of Du Pont's Conoco Inc energy unit, analysts said.

Du Pont officials were not immediately available for comment.

Mr James Wilbur, an analyst at Smith Barney, said the sale of a stake in Conoco could benefit Du Pont by reducing its holdings in the slow-growing oil business.

Du Pont shares rose 2 points to 85 1/2. Seagram Co, Du Pont's largest shareholder with 23 per cent, rose 1 1/2 points to 60 1/2.

Mr Wilbur said Du Pont, which bought Conoco for \$6.8 billion (£3.75 billion) in 1981, could command \$12.5 billion for the whole unit, including \$10 billion for the oil and gas business and \$2 billion for coal.

WALL STREET

Table with columns for Dec 15, Dec 14, Dec 13, Dec 12, Dec 11, Dec 10, Dec 9, Dec 8, Dec 7, Dec 6, Dec 5, Dec 4, Dec 3, Dec 2, Dec 1. Lists various stock indices and prices.

CANADIAN PRICES

Table listing Canadian stock prices for various companies like Agnico Agex, Alcan, etc.

LONDON TRADED OPTIONS

Large table of London traded options with columns for various stock options and their prices.

TRADITIONAL OPTIONS

Table listing traditional options for various stocks.

New York lifts ban on poison pill defences

By Our City Staff

Britain's corporate raiders will find Wall Street a tougher place to do business after a decision by the New York state legislature to allow state registered companies to use "poison pill" defences in order to repel bidders.

The decision by New York's Senate and Assembly reverses a court ruling three months ago banning poison pills, which are usually called shareholder rights plans. The most common form of this tactic allows a company to issue large amounts of new common stock to existing holders, often at a large discount, if a single investor buys a 20 per cent stake. This makes the cost of buying a company prohibitively expensive.

The decision to allow shareholders rights plans for a temporary period to April 1 next year arises partly from hostility to the takeover of Irving Trust Co by the Bank of New York.

Legislative officials said New York companies had assumed they had a right to use poison pills until a state court ruled that under current law all shares of a company incorporated in New York must be treated equally.

But the essential element of the poison pill is treating shareholders differently. Business groups had argued that the court's ruling left the New York corporations vulnerable to unwanted takeovers.

Only four states - Hawaii, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin - specifically allow poison pills. Officials also pointed out that poison pill plans had never actually been carried out; in effect they allow companies time to negotiate with an unwanted suitor or thwart a takeover effort.

Mr Edward Reinartz, vice president of the Business Council, said: "To deny New York incorporated companies what is said to be the single most effective defensive measure would leave them not only vulnerable, but also at a competitive disadvantage."

The legislation authorizes the state's courts, when a poison pill is challenged, to examine whether the defence is being used to protect the company and its staff or to further the interests of entrenched management. Company's should also consider future potential when reviewing takeover offers.

Bid for stake in UK rival refused European Commission halts move by Danish fur trader

From Michael Dynes, Brussels

In its continuing efforts to force companies to abide by the competition provisions of the Treaty of Rome, the European Commission announced that it had put a halt to attempts by DPA, the Danish fur company, to acquire a minority shareholding in Hudson's Bay and Annings, its British rival.

DPA, the largest of the Scandinavian fur auction houses, and the selling arm of the Danish Fur Breeders Association, had attempted to buy a 35 per cent shareholding in HBA.

This would have enabled it to exercise a considerable influence over the commercial conduct of its unwelcome rival in the community's fur trade.

But the Commission objected to the acquisition, citing the 1979 Philip Morris ruling by the European Court of Justice, which called on the Commission to exercise its powers to prevent any acquisition that could lead to the creation or consolidation of a market dominance. The Commission wrote to the DPA, threatening it with "interim measures" as a means of preventing a company from proceeding with a proposed acquisition until the Commission has reached a final decision in competition cases.

But as a result of a meeting between the Commission and the companies involved in the case, "undertakings have now been given to the effect that DPA will not proceed with the acquisition or with any other commercial arrangements having the same effect," the Commission said.

In a separate announcement, the Commission said that IBM, the United States computer group, had agreed to an indefinite continuation of the arrangement reached in 1984, whereby IBM is obliged to provide basic interface information about its computer products to its competitors.

The arrangement between IBM and the Commission, which resulted in the Commission suspending competition proceedings against the company, was due to expire at the end of 1989.

The Commission also announced its intention to step up the pressure on national governments to give prior notification to Brussels of their intention to allocate grants or loans to industry, as part of the Commission's long-term campaign to clamp down on illegal government subsidies.

France, Belgium, Greece, Italy and Spain were singled out by the Commission for repeatedly violating European Economic Community rules by not informing the Brussels authorities in advance of their intention to grant aid to national companies.

All five countries have been given an ultimatum to improve their notification procedures within the next two months, or face the prospect of being hauled in front of the European Court of Justice for violating the Community's competition code.

Lower wages attract West German investment to UK

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

Direct investment in the United Kingdom by West German industry is running close to £3.5 billion. The UK is now the most favoured location for West German investment in Europe and worldwide is second only to the United States.

More than three-quarters of this investment, which is almost wholly from industrial companies, has arrived this decade following a much slower build-up over the previous three decades, according to a new survey by the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce in the UK.

The survey was based on the experience of 326 companies, offshoots of West German enterprises, located in the UK. These represent most of the major and medium-sized West German operations in the UK, directly employing about 48,000 people, including manufacturing and sales.

A number of factors lie behind the leap in investment, which covers a wide range of products and services. One is a drive by the West Germans to strengthen exports to the UK, their third best export market, by creating a local base.

They also see the UK as a good base from which to develop exports out of the UK. Lower wage costs and taxation make the UK attractive as a key manufacturing base.

The survey revealed that 80 per cent of companies with manufacturing operations in the UK reported good to excellent returns on investment. The same proportion reported that labour relations in the UK were equally favourable.

About 65 per cent of those with manufacturing bases in the UK claimed good to excellent rates of productivity.

West German investment in the UK in 1987 amounted to £820 million, a surge of 224 per cent compared with 1986.

HK bank breaks link with Pao

From Stephen Leather, Hong Kong

Hongkong and Shanghai Bank is pulling out of a 30-year-old joint shipping business with Sir Yue-kong Pao and is to pay HK\$662 million (£47 million) for a stake in the Crown Colony's container terminal operations.

The bank first teamed up with the shipping magnate in 1962 and was one of the first commercial banking groups in the world to take a prominent equity stake in a shipping enterprise.

Mr John Gray, Hong Kong Bank executive director, said: "We shall continue to be partners with the Pao family, but shipping in Hong Kong is now a mature and developed industry. It is therefore appropriate for us to shift the balance between our involvement in those manufacturing and our role as commercial lenders."

The bank is selling 30 per cent of World Marine and 28 per cent of World Shipping and Investment back to Sir Yue-kong for an undisclosed sum. That will reduce the bank's stakes in the two firms which are holding companies for a number of dry bulk vessels and tankers managed by World-Wide Shipping, Sir Yue-kong's private company, to 20 per cent. The remaining shares may be sold to the shipping tycoon within one to four years.

While shipping is in the doldrums, Hong Kong's port facilities are booming and the colony's container operations are the busiest in the world.

The bank is to buy a 5 per cent stake in Hong Kong International Terminals, the Hutchison Whampoa subsidiary which was earlier this year awarded the contract for building and operating Terminal Seven with a HK\$4.3 billion bid.

"Hong Kong's port is at the centre of the Crown Colony's commercial life and its expansion is of considerable importance, both for Hong Kong and the bank," said Mr Gray.

Mr Li Ka-shing's Hutchison Whampoa is to consolidate Terminal Four, Terminal Six, and the new Terminal Seven into a single unit, following which it will hold 60 per cent of the enlarged HIT group, Orient Overseas (Holdings), the shipping company, will own 15 per cent, and the bank 5 per cent.

Tinsley Robor ahead

Tinsley Robor, the printing and packaging group, had pre-tax profits for the six months to end-September up from £641,000 to £893,000. Turnover rose to £18.02 million (£14.68 million) and earnings per share were up from 2.15p to 2.55p. There is an interim dividend of 0.75p.

More of what you're looking for. THE TIMES CLASSIFIED. To place your advertisement telephone 01-481 4000.

First Dealings Last Dealings Last Declaration For Settlement December 5 December 19 March 9 Call options were taken out on 16/12/88 Blue Arrow, Garrison, Eurofund Wms, United, Recluses Wms, Luvrho, Mounting, Caspan Oil, Pentland, BGR, Walkman, Colibri, Charnwell, Sears.



# STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES

## Recovery continues

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began December 12. Dealings end December 23. Contango day December 28. Settlement day January 9.   
 \$Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days.

Prices recorded are at 4pm. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Where one price is quoted, it is a middle price. Changes, yields and price earnings ratios are based on middle prices. (a) denotes Alpha Stocks.

(VOLUMES PAGE 25)

### Portfolio PLUS Accumulator

From your Portfolio gold card check your eight share price movements, on this page only. Add these prices to your running total for the week and check this against the weekly dividend figure on this page. If 41 matches or better this figure, you have won outright on a share of the total weekly pool outright on a share of the total weekly pool outright on a share of the total weekly pool. If you lose, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. You must always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No.	Company	Group	Gain or Loss
1	MB Group (a)	Industrials L-R	...
2	Sears (a)	Drugs/Stores	...
3	Higgs & Hill	Building Roads	...
4	Penfold Ind	Industrials L-R	...
5	BOC (a)	Industrials A-D	...
6	Delany (a)	Food	...
7	Card Op	Property	...
8	Low & Bonar	Industrials L-R	...
9	Clyde Pet	Oil/Gas	...
10	Lee (Arthur)	Industrials L-R	...
11	Barchus (a)	Banks/Discount	...
12	Proving	Building Roads	...
13	Kwik-Fit	Motors/Aircraft	...
14	Warrington	Property	...
15	Six Hundred	Industrials S-Z	...
16	Rugby Group	Building Roads	...
17	Belway	Building Roads	...
18	Amar	Building Roads	...
19	Nita Foods (a)	Food	...
20	Barbour Index	Newspapers/Pub	...
21	Morrison (W)	Food	...
22	Regalia	Property	...
23	Mackay (Hugh)	Textiles	...
24	Emp China Clay (a)	Industrials E-K	...
25	Allied Irish	Banks/Discount	...
26	Ex Telecom (a)	Electronics	...
27	Wesley C (a)	Building Roads	...
28	VSE	Industrials S-Z	...
29	Kwik Save	Food	...
30	De Mohair	Textiles	...
31	Sarr & WA 'A'	Food	...
32	Low (Wm)	Food	...
33	Evered	Industrials E-K	...
34	McAlpine (Alfred)	Building Roads	...
35	Anglia Soc	Building Roads	...
36	WPP	Paper/Print/Adv	...
37	Wharfedale	Industrials S-Z	...
38	Step Furniture	Industrials S-Z	...
39	Appleton Hilda	Food	...
40	Rose Mansell	Paper/Print/Adv	...
41	Yale & Volor	Drugs/Stores	...
42	Whitcroft	Industrials S-Z	...
43	IMI (a)	Industrials E-K	...

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend  
Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £8,000 in today's newspaper.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	Weekly Total

### BRITISH FUNDS

1988	High	Low	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	Div	Gain
1024	1024	1024	1024	1024	1024	1024	1024	1024

### FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS

1988	High	Low	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	Div	Gain
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### OVER FIFTEEN YEARS

1988	High	Low	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	Div	Gain
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### UNDATED

1988	High	Low	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	Div	Gain
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### INDEX-LINKED

1988	High	Low	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	Div	Gain
1024	1024	1024	1024	1024	1024	1024	1024	1024

### BANKS, DISCOUNT HP

1988	High	Low	Stock	Price	Change	Yield	Div	Gain
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### BREWERIES

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### FINANCE, LAND

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### FINANCIAL TRUSTS

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### WEEKLY DIVIDEND £8,000

Claims required for 201 points

ACCUMULATOR £56,000

Claims better than 201 points

Claimants should ring 0254-53272

### PROPERTY

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### TOBACCO

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### WEEKLY DIVIDEND £8,000

Claims required for 201 points

ACCUMULATOR £56,000

Claims better than 201 points

Claimants should ring 0254-53272

### PROPERTY

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### SHOES, LEATHER

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Main table containing unit trust information with columns for Bid, Offer, Weekly Change, and Ytd Change. Includes sections for ARMY UNIT TRUST MANAGERS, CAZENDINE UNIT TRUST MANAGERS, CENTRAL BOARD OF FINANCE OF THE FINE FOODS GROUP, and various other fund managers.

The prices in this section refer to Thursday's trading

UNLISTED SECURITIES

Table of unlisted securities with columns for High, Low, Bid, Offer, Change, and %Y. Lists various companies and their stock prices.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

Table of foreign exchange rates for Sterling index, Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, and Other Sterling Rates.

MONEY MARKETS

Table of money market rates including Euro Money Deposits, Bullion, and Coins.

COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices for London Financial Futures, London Metal Exchange, and Meat & Livestock Commission.

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Table of investment trusts with columns for Bid, Offer, Weekly Change, and Ytd Change. Lists various trust funds.

Large advertisement for Debar featuring a portrait of a man and the text 'Debar', 'anger as Co', 'unches ne', and 'maf aims fo'. Includes a small image of a man's face.



FAMILY MONEY

Edited by Vivien Goldsmith

# Debate over commissions rages on

Would you be put off buying an investment or insurance contract if you knew just how much was going straight into the salesman's pocket? Or would you be more put off to discover that the salesman was a company representative and committed to selling the products of just one company?

This is at the heart of the debate raging over the disclosure of commissions.

At the moment the standard commission rates mean that when you buy a 25-year endowment policy a quarter of the monthly premiums go to the salesman for slightly more than three years. Thereafter 2.5 per cent of the premiums go to the salesman. If

you take out a 20 year pensions contract with a premium of £5,000 a year, £1,250 of the first two premiums will go in commission to the salesman and £125 on the next eight premiums.

The Securities and Investments Board unveiled its plans this week of how commissions are to be revealed to the public.

The consumer lobby believes the public has a right to know how much of their money is going to the salesman, but the cost of doing this may be the wiping out of the independent financial advice sector, which would not be good news for investors.

At the moment there are more than 30,000 sources of indepen-

dent financial advice, including all the branches of the large building societies (with the exception of the Abbey National and Cheltenham & Gloucester), Nat West Bank, and 9,000 independent firms.

While independence is seen as being "a good thing," the climate has changed, so that most people in the financial services industry now believe that it is inevitable that this pool of independent advice will dry up. The Halifax Building Society, for instance, has admitted that it has been talking to several large insurance companies, and the Norwich Union, a founder-member of the Campaign for Independent Financial Advice (Carnif), announced this week

that it to recruit tied agents. The scramble to tie up the independent - large and small - is now on.

The SIB blueprint is not as harsh as some independent intermediaries feared. They will not have to talk about the amount of the commission at the time the sale is being made. They will just have to tell clients that this is the method by which they will be paid. And when the product details are sent to the client up to two weeks later, the disclosure will be in terms of the percentage of premiums that go in commission - not absolute amounts.

Tied agents will not have to talk about their payments at all - even though these are likely to be higher

than those on offer to independents. They will have to state clearly that they are tied, but there will be no revelation about the method of payment, although tied agents as opposed to a salesforce are still paid by commission, which is up to one-and-a-half times the rate paid to independents.

This has brought howls of anguish from the independents, who feel that they are being unfairly treated. Mr John Holt of Reading speaks for many when he says that clients are not interested in commission disclosure, and paradoxically that revelation will kill his business.

"Hard disclosure will drive

firms such as ourselves into the arms of the big battalions of insurance companies who wish to sign up tied agents. We shall not stand by and see a lifetime's work destroyed - we shall become a tied agent of one of the big companies and enjoy 40 per cent additional remuneration with far less administration costs."

The British Insurance Brokers Association, which represents independent brokers, wants to see clients told exactly how much of their premiums will be invested. "It is the end result that matters to them," says Mr Paul Bland, a BIBA spokesman. "Telling the general investor how much is being paid out in commissions is

not telling him what he needs to know." This method of disclosure would produce a straight comparison between what is offered by the tied and independent salesman.

SIB rejected any thought of devising a way of forcing companies to reveal the payments package made to tied salesman. They are paid commission, but on top of this they receive training, support with office systems such as computer software, advertising and promotional literature. SIB believes that however exhaustive a list of required disclosures, the companies would find other ways of paying them.

Vivien Goldsmith

## Anger as Co-op Bank launches new account

The Co-operative Bank fired the starting gun this week in the race by banks to beat the building societies at the interest-bearing current account game.

But the bank was immediately attacked by competitors for the unusual way it has chosen to credit interest to the account. The new account, a revamped version of the Cheque & Save account launched in 1982, now has four tiers of interest, ranging from 4.5 per cent on deposits up to £399 to 8.5 per cent on £2,500 and more.

But the Co-op pays those rates only on the amounts in the tier, so a move up the ladder does not bring a better rate on the whole deposit. This is contrary to the practice in

with other accounts, as customers with deposits of £2,500 or more will be earning four different rates, and some fast work on the calculator would be needed to work out how this actually compares with the same amount deposited elsewhere.

Nevertheless, the Co-op has high hopes for the account, and believes that people will use it to combine savings with every day money management.

It carries all the usual current account services, including a cheque guarantee card, standing order and direct debit facilities. Customers can also overdraw by an average of £200 for seven days a quarter without charge.

"This will allow for a small overdraft each month or indeed a £1,400 overdraft for one day," the bank says.

For those whose average overdraft exceeds the limit there is a charge of £18 for the quarter and interest of 26.8 per cent (annual percentage rate).

The salvo fired by Lloyds and the Nationwide after the wraps were taken off the Co-op's scheme are a sign of the mounting competition for current account customers.

Each of the big four clearers is set to launch interest-bearing accounts early in the New Year.

Competition is also strong in the savings market. A prediction by the Co-op's marketing men this week that 1989 would be "the year of the saver" is unlikely to prove wide of the mark.

On the same day as the Co-op released details of the new Cheque & Save, Lloyds Bank made a further move into previously hallowed building society territory by announcing an instant-access savings account with five levels of interest: 6.5 per cent on £1 to £499; 8.3 per cent on £500 to £4,999; 8.6 per cent on £5,000 to £9,999; 8.9 per cent on £10,000 to £24,999 and 9.2 per cent on £25,000 plus.

"We intend to meet the

competition head-on - both building societies and clearing banks," said Mr David Pirrie, senior general manager, retail banking, at Lloyds.

The new account competes head-on with the tiered rate, instant-access accounts pioneered by building societies, such as the Abbey National's Five Star.

The Abbey also announced a round of interest increases on its accounts this week. The increases, which apply from January 1, vary, with the highest being 0.7 per cent. There is no change in the 5 per cent paid on the society's current account.

Rates on Five-Star now range from 8.4 per cent for deposits of between £500 and £4,999 to 9.25 per cent for £5,000 plus.

**• The account will allow for a small overdraft each month, or a £1,400 overdraft for a day •**

No decision has been made by the country's largest society, the Halifax, on its response to the latest jump in the base rate, and none is likely until after Christmas - which means that Halifax borrowers may not see a higher mortgage rate until February, although savers' rates could go up before then.

A spokesman for the Halifax said: "The economy and the interest rate scene are still uncertain, and it is premature to announce new rates."

"We prefer to wait until after Christmas, and will therefore decide on our new higher investors and mortgage rates early in January."

The spokesman agreed that 1989 would be a tough year for all players in both the savings and mortgage markets. "We are already planning for a highly competitive year on both sides of the balance sheet," he said.

Maria Scott

## Mending skiing's bad breaks

Maggie Drummond reports on ways to insure against bad times on and off the wintry slopes

If you are one of the thousands of skiers who had to put up with a sludgy brown, rather than a white, Christmas on the slopes last year you might consider the "no-snow" insurance guarantee contained in many package tour brochures a bit of a joke.

This is supposed to cover you against the awful eventuality of going off on your much-anticipated - and expensive - skiing holiday, only to find there is no snow to ski on. Typically, the payment offered under a no-snow guarantee will be £20 a head per day if you and your party cannot be transported to ski somewhere else. The trouble is, this guarantee does not seem to work very efficiently.

Last season, for instance, hordes of disgruntled beginners whose holiday was ruined by the lack of snow found they were not entitled to their £20 a day either. This was because there was enough snow on the higher slopes for the experienced skiers. And the no-snow guarantee does not operate until all the runs and lifts in the resort have been closed.

So, if it so happens that there is no snow in the part where you should be skiing, that is your hard luck. Unless everything is shut down you cannot claim.

"No-snow insurance is not terribly effective" agrees Mr Colin Allum of Fogg Travel Insurance, the company that first marketed this kind of guarantee a decade ago.

"It was developed on the basis of disaster for everybody, rather than the individual," he says. "I can't see any other way of organizing it. It would be a nightmare if people could claim because they personally didn't get any skiing. We would have to start paying out as soon as one run closed."

Last year, for example, was



Pain on the piste: every season produces its crop of broken limbs, and inadequate medical insurance can add insult to injury

not a great insurance disaster, because most of the resorts managed to keep some runs open although many individuals had minimal sport.

Whatever the inadequacies in this department, however, specialist skiing insurance is absolutely essential for anyone taking to the slopes.

Every season brings its crop of broken legs and medical treatment is expensive - adding insult to injury. Most responsible package tour operators insist that customers take out ski insurance which, for a typical fortnight's holiday, costs between £25 and £30 for Europe and double that if you are doing the fashionable thing this year - going to the United States to ski.

If you are not going on a package or do not want to take the operator's policy, National Westminster will sell you a Winter Sports Protector Policy across the counter. Fogg Travel Insurance (0623

313331) and Douglas Cox Tyrie (01-247 8888) are two specialist insurers catering for the independent skier.

The majority of ski insurance claims take the form of medical expenses. And when you look at the policies it is worth enquiring about the technicalities of paying any medical bills. Some insurers expect you to pay the lot on the spot and then claim when you arrive back home. This can involve coughing up several hundred or even thousands of pounds at the point of treatment, which can be very inconvenient and difficult.

More usefully, other insurers can arrange for the bills to be paid direct to the hospital or doctor by the insurance company. All Douglas Cox Tyrie insurance packages include this facility, as does the service offered by Fogg Travel.

Another useful feature to look for if you are skiing independently, is whether the

insurance policy has a 24-hour emergency telephone line to one of the international medical and repatriation agencies such as Europ Assistance or Medi Call.

Package tour skiers, on the other hand, can expect the travel company representative to help on the spot in a crisis. But they should still check out the payment requirement. Skiing insurance is expensive, double the cost for ordinary holiday insurance, but keen skiers who go several times a year - and increasing numbers are doing this - can save by buying a policy that covers them for the whole season, however many ski trips they take. Among these "season tickets" are Flexipack from Douglas Cox Tyrie (£60) and Supaski from Fogg Travel (£85).

And if you are going skiing with the children it is worth asking whether any family insurance package is available - this might work out cheaper

than buying individual policies.

One area where all holiday insurance is lamentably inadequate is the amount you can claim for loss or theft of personal possessions, although most policies state a total cover of £1,000 or more.

The point to watch is the limit for individual items. National Westminster's Winter Sports Protector is particularly mean, it has to be said, with a limit of £200 on any one item - but the rest are not much better. You may well find that your camera, video equipment and all the rest of the expensive clutter you lug around these days is better covered through the All Risks section of your household insurance policy.

Another point to watch is the amount of cover for your skis. If you take your own on holiday with you. In addition, many policies exclude theft or breakage of skis you hire in the resort.

## Amaf aims for seats on Abbey National board

The pressure group attempting to prevent the Abbey National Building Society's move towards a stock market flotation is trying to unseat key members of the board.

Seven of the 16 member board, including Sir Campbell Adamson, the chairman, and Mr Peter Birch, the chief executive, come up for re-election at the next annual meeting in April.

Abbey Members Against Flotation has seven candidates willing to oppose the sitting members, and is attempting to collect enough signatures to have their nominations on the ballot papers. About 100,000 to 150,000 of the Abbey's 6



Sandison: Amaf spokesman million members normally vote in these elections. So Amaf spokesman Mr Alexander Sandison believes there is a real possibility of generating

enough support to unseat the sitting members. "I should not be surprised if we get the lot on," he said.

Amaf is currently collecting the 50 signatures supporting each candidate required to get their names on the election ballot. The deadline for collecting the signatures is the end of the year. The candidates will then be able to set out their philosophy in a 200-word statement which will be circulated by the Abbey.

The rebel candidates are Professor Barry Supple, master of St Catharine's College, Cambridge, Miss Elizabeth Stamp, Oxfam information officer, Professor Robert Perks of Aberdeen University, Mr

Thomas Lines, of Edinburgh University, Mr Alec Leaver, Amaf's chairman, Mr Christopher Bazlinton, an editor of housing journals, and Mr Clive Clark, an accountant.

They are all opposed to the Abbey's plan to convert from a mutual building society to a bank with shareholders. But they will find that the unseating by many Abbey shareholders, about this change of status

of the building society will have to be balanced against the greed factor.

Although the terms of the flotation have not yet been announced, it is likely that existing Abbey members will be given some shares in the Abbey, as well as being invited to subscribe for more shares. Those with less than £100 in their accounts at the crucial time and those under 18 years

old can look forward to a cash payout.

So Amaf may find that those opposed to the flotation will reap the rewards before switching to another building society which is maintaining its mutual status.

V.G.

Abbey Members Against Flotation, 93, Ridgmount Gardens, London, WC1E 7AZ.

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INTEREST RATES ROUND-UP

Table with columns: Nominal rate, Compounded rate, Investment C, Notice, Contact. Rows include Ordinary Dep A/c, Fixed Term Deposits, High Interest Cheque Accounts.

Table with columns: Bank, Offer, Weekly chng, Ytd. Rows include Bank of Scotland, Barclays, City of London.

Table with columns: Offer, Weekly chng, Ytd. Rows include Building Societies, National Savings, Guaranteed Income Bonds.

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FAMILY MONEY

When the paper is the present

Tired of trudging from one toy shop to the next? Simon Rose gives some easier alternatives for Christmas

You could be forgiven for thinking the only people who do well out of Christmas are toy and games manufacturers. So instead of buying your children yet more toys...



Talking profits: Richard King, Fergabrook chairman, with Baby Talk and Count Duckula

Wembley balls, was reversed into it and it received a capital injection. Mr Richard King, the chairman, says: "Our range is improving dramatically."

The USM Magazine, gave a breakdown on their value as prospective investments.

He acknowledges that "for the first time in four years, the story that Fergabrook is about to be turned round rings true. But as a penny stock, it may not be one for widows, orphans or children. It is still speculative."

Thoughts of charity the whole year round

This Christmas millions of us will be signing our greetings cards in the knowledge that while we are wishing our friends the compliments of the season, we are also helping our favourite charity.

Anyone receiving pay or a pension through PAYE can join. To date, more than 65,000 employees have used the scheme, donating about £4 million.

As well as any number of smaller companies operate Give-as-you-earn schemes. If your employer does not have the appropriate form, you can still participate - and shake your company into action - by applying to the Charities Aid Foundation, which operates direct.

Charity Christmas cards are big business - more than a quarter of the population will be sending them this year. However, the sad truth is that for charities they are an expensive and often inefficient way of raising money.

All you have to do is to fill in a form on which you can agree to give anything from 25p a week up to £240 a year to the charity of your choice. The donation will be deducted from your salary. If you elect to give, for example, £10 a month, it will actually cost only £7.50 because the taxman will not take the £2.50 due (at the basic rate), which will also go to the charity.

If you would rather give a lump-sum, the most tax efficient way is by signing a deed of covenant. Many charities have their own standard forms on which you agree to pay the charity a certain amount a year for a minimum of three years.

"Well-organized fund-raisers can expect about a third of the revenue from the cards they sell to go to their charity," says Miss Hilary Doling of the Charities Advisory Trust, "but some more inexperienced, smaller charities have even been known to make losses."

In reality, although we all have charitable thoughts at Christmas, it is actually a very bad time to ask for money, says Miss Blaine, "because people have so many other expenses at this time of the year."

For those who do not wish to donate all their gifts to just one charity the CAF has introduced a voucher system. This means that instead of signing a deed of covenant with a particular charity you sign one with the CAF. It will then issue you with a personalized book of vouchers. You can then write a "cheque" to any charity you choose.

But there are few toy and games companies quoted on the stock market as many

characters are not as important as they were just a couple of years back. There has been quite a return to traditional toys, and more conventional games are also doing well this year.

This quarter will be joined in January by Cassidy of Blackpool, which makes miniature appliances such as washing machines and tumble dryers. Its Electrolux vacuum cleaners has sold more through mail order than any other single toy.

UNIT-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

Large table with multiple columns listing various insurance investment funds, their offers, weekly changes, and year-to-date performance.

Advertisement for a 9.0% NEI (New Equity Investment) account, featuring a large percentage and the text '9.0% NEI' and 'Your savings account returns like this'.



# FAMILY MONEY

Digby Lerner assesses the types of retirement schemes

## Golden age for annuities

### Bonus is bad news for some

Norwich Union and Commercial Union started the bonus declaration round this week by announcing increased bonuses for longer-term plans but not such good news for those with shorter-term policies.

Maturing 10-year policies with the Norwich Union receive an unchanged payout, while those from Commercial Union suffer a 2 per cent cut compared with last year. This reflects increased charges brought in 10 years ago.

On 15-year policies, the payout from Norwich Union is up by 5 per cent and that from CU up by 2 per cent.

Policies with a 25-year term, the standard used to back a mortgage, had a 7 per cent boost from Norwich Union and a 9 per cent boost from CU.

The two life offices have very different approaches to paying out the bonuses. With-profit policies attract an annual bonus which rolls up with the maturing policy, and a fluctuating terminal bonus when the policy matures.

Commercial Union boasts that only a relatively small percentage of the total payout — between 20 and 26 per cent — is composed of the vulnerable terminal bonus. But Norwich Union policyholders receive 41 per cent of their total payout as a terminal bonus.

Although a degree of certainty is important, what really counts is the absolute payouts. A 29-year-old man who had taken out a £100-a-year, 25-year endowment policy with Norwich Union would see the mature policy paying out a total of £15,620, while the Commercial Union policy would pay out £14,979.

The industry average is £11,390, while 10 companies would have paid out less than £9,000, including Australian Mutual Provident, Britannic, London & Manchester, Sentinel Life and at the bottom of list Confederation Life with a payout of just £4,831.

Vivien Goldsmith

All new-style personal pension plans, and some old ones, provide a fund on retirement which the pensioner uses to buy an annuity. It is this annuity — the promise of a set income for life — that provides the actual retirement income.

"With the current high level of interest rates, now is one of the best times to buy annuities," says Mr Roger Beace, director of personal financial planning at Fleming Montagu Stanley, the stockbroker.

"All investors over the age of 65 ought now to be considering investing a part of their investments in annuities, to secure a high level of income for life," he added.

But mostly people buy annuities with their pension fund on retirement. The company which has provided the pension scheme will also be able to offer an annuity. But

since July, when new pensions legislation came into force, most personal pensions allow one to choose an annuity from any insurance company offering the best deal.

All very well in principle but, as Mr Tom Nelson of Middlesbrough, Suffolk, has found out, not so straightforward in practice. He has two Section 226 money purchase plans with Equitable Life and Clerical Medical.

Mr Nelson is a self-employed agricultural merchant who is thinking of retiring next year. He would like to secure the best deal for his money and has approached each of the companies he is investing with for advice. But product providers are now constrained by the terms of the Financial Services Act. Since April 29 this year he is the only person who can advise on

products market-wide are authorized independent financial advisers.

Several types of retirement annuity are available and choice should depend on individual needs.

The most common is the immediate annuity. The pensioner hands over his cash lump sum and in return the insurance company promises to pay a regular income for life.

These are ideally suited to individuals who have no dependents or whose spouse has made separate retirement arrangements. This is because on death the income payments finish even if the annuitant dies having received less than the amount of the original investment.

For people with other dependent on their income it is more sensible to buy an annuity which guarantees that the pension is paid for a specified period, normally five or 10 years. The income will continue to be paid whether or not the annuitant survives.

An alternative to this is a capital guaranteed annuity which promises to pay out at least the amount of the original investment. If the annuitant dies having received less than this the company will pay the outstanding balance to his estate.

Joint life last survivor plans are mainly appropriate for retiring married couples. They will pay out one level of income while both husband and wife are alive but will



Looking for the best deal: Tom Nelson, a self-employed agricultural merchant

continue to pay out a reduced amount when one has died. This will usually be about two-thirds of the original income which is then paid until the death of the survivor.

Inflation can cause problems — a 5 per cent annual

inflation rate, for example, will effectively halve the value of a pension over a 10-year period.

Two types of annuity provide an escalating income. The most common type increases by a set rate each year

regardless of the rate of inflation. There is, however, an annuity which keeps pace with the Retail Price Index.

Annuity rates are constantly changing so near retirement seek out your independent financial adviser.

### Composite tax rate falls

Building societies, banks, local authorities and other deposit-takers will be deducting 21.75 per cent from interest earned on savings accounts from April 6, 1989. This deduction, through the composite rate of tax, is handed to the Inland Revenue and cannot be recovered by investors even if they are non tax-payers. The current composite rate is 23.25 per cent and the reduction reflects the two-point drop in the basic rate of tax in this year's Budget.

### Policy changes

The rules on the rights of investors to change their securities and investments are being tightened. Investors must receive notice of their cancellation rights within seven days of agreeing to buy and then they normally have 14 days to reverse the decision. The postal strike led to problems and the Investments Board had to declare a state of emergency, relaxing the rules. Now it proposes that when there is an emergency it will be treated as a public holiday. This would automatically stop the clock on the time limits for sending cancellation notices or returning them.

### Old money

Hoarders could gain from doing a quick inventory of the attic armed with *Is It Worth Anything?* — a guide to collectibles by Mr Stephen Ellis, a financial journalist. In 167 pages the book cannot cover everything there is to know about the most popular collectors' items, but it provides a rough idea of what is valuable and what not — and names the most sought-after examples in each category. These include postcards, stamps, coins, toys and financial paraphernalia such as old life assurance policies.

### NIG advice

National Investment Group, the stockbroker specializing in portfolio management for private clients, is giving advice on best buys in building society accounts. NIG is drawing on information provided by *Building Society Choice* magazine, which checks savings account rates. NIG expects the service to be most popular with investors wanting to use cash deposits as part of a wider investment portfolio. It will be charging a flat fee of £20 for advice, no matter how large the deposit.

#### Immediate Annuities — Purchase Price £10,000

Female Age 60	Annuity (£)	Male Age 60	Annuity (£)
Crusader	1184.00	Equitable Life	1304.30
Providence Capital	1188.00	RNPF Nurses	1302.64
Equitable Life	1188.40	Providence Capital	1301.40
Canada Life	1175.95	Crusader	1287.00
Scottish Equitable	1172.00	Scottish Equitable	1286.00
RNPF Nurses	1171.98	Clerical Medical	1285.00
Pearl Assurance	1171.00	Abbey Life	1284.20
FS Assurance	1170.60	Britannic Assurance	1278.00
Abbey Life	1170.80	FS Assurance	1275.02
Clerical Medical	1170.00	General Accident	1275.00
National Provident	1170.00	Standard Life	1269.80
Generale	1167.98	Scottish Widows	1265.00
Britannic Assurance	1164.00	Sagic Mutual	1262.00
Eagle Star	1164.00	Scottish Mutual	1262.00
Co-Op Insurance	1164.00	Sun Alliance	1262.00
Sun Life	1163.16	Pearl Assurance	1262.00
General Accident	1162.20	Norwich Union	1262.00
Standard Life	1159.80	National Provident	1262.00
Scottish Widows	1159.50	Canada Life	1257.00
Scottish Mutual	1159.00	Sun Life	1256.84

Gross annuity payable half-yearly in arrears — without proportion payments.

## Stockbroker fined Ir£500 for obstructing investigation

The manager of a Dublin broker has been fined Ir£500 (£420) for obstructing Irish government officials who visited the company's premises after *The Times* published an article warning against the firm in June.

*The Times* said the firm, Bailey McMahon, was issuing mailshots to investors in Britain, offering shares in a London entertainment business, MOR Music Ltd, which was said to be part-owned by the comedian Jimmy Tarbuck. According to Bailey McMahon sales staff, MOR Music shares would be traded

on the Stock Exchange in London, so would be readily marketable.

However, SE officials denied all knowledge of the company and pointed out that as a new business it could not qualify for a share quote. Similarly, Jimmy Tarbuck issued a statement saying he had no involvement whatsoever with MOR Music and had made no investment in it.

Four days after the article appeared, officials from Ireland's Office of Consumer Affairs went to Bailey McMahon offices in Merion Square, Dublin, but manager

Leslie Williams, a former share dealer with a London broker, refused to admit them.

In Dublin District Court this week, Williams pleaded guilty to obstructing investigations into offences under the Republic's laws on misleading advertising.

Bailey McMahon itself, and John Tobias, managing director, also pleaded guilty to failing to produce records of deals involving shares in four other companies: Delcorp, Del Rio Resources, Daytona Spyder Corp and US Protect Systems. The

company was fined Ir£400, and Tobias was fined Ir£300 with one month's suspended prison sentence.

In court, the deputy director of the Office of Consumer Affairs, Mr Eugene Stuart, said his staff was investigating allegations that Bailey McMahon sold shares in "obscure companies in foreign countries," which investors would find difficult to sell.

Tobias had admitted to him that Bailey McMahon only sold shares to investors outside the Republic. Ten of the company's 13 staff were

employed by a separate firm registered in Panama, and Tobias said salesmen used false names in calls to clients, for what he described as "ethnic reasons."

After the hearing, Mr Stuart said: "We asked for sufficient information on which an informed investor could judge the shares' value and marketability. We are now taking up our investigations where we left off before the court case. We still want all the information they denied us."

Tony Hetherington

### Brokers and British Steel

From Mr P. Howells  
Sir, Gwendoline Lamb complains the British Steel share issue is unfair (December 3).

She says private investors are unable to deal in Steel shares until they receive allocation letters. This is not so.

In most cases brokers will act for clients on the "dictum meum pactum" principle she quotes, selling shares for them which are not yet supported by allocation letters. One crucial point, however, is that brokers will normally so act only for their clients — not for strangers whose "pactum" could be of uncertain worth.

If Ms Lamb wishes to speculate she should avail herself of the services of a stockbroker well before she expects to deal.

### A question of legal/administrative fees on mortgages

From Mr H.R. Anderson  
Sir, Nearly a year ago my wife and I completed a mortgage with Chemical Bank Home Loans. In the bank's letter following completion of the mortgage I was amazed to find they had added a £150 arrangement fee to the loan. I queried this. Chemical Bank took two months to reply and referred me to a condition in their Home Loan Offer. This

### Plea to simplify life claims

From Mr J. E. Cowen  
Sir, May I add to the plea made by Mr G Fenner (December 3)?

Why do companies insist on seeing both probate and death certificate? When I tied up a small estate this year for an elderly widow who needed the money — as much as she could get — as quickly as possible, I bought several stamped copies of probate at 25p each. I need not have bothered. Death certificates are much dearer, and I had only one.

Every insurance company insisted on seeing both documents. I pointed out to the local managers of two huge national companies that the probate document itself certified death, and if the court was

### LETTERS

whose shares are being issued. The intention is to allow individuals to invest in shares on a fair basis, not to offer the opportunity for the greedy to make a fast buck.

If Ms Lamb simply wishes to gamble on the Stock Exchange she should expect little sympathy from the DTI. Yours faithfully, P. HOWELLS, Albion Street, Leeds.

### Portfolio PLUS Accumulator

For readers who may have missed a copy of *The Times* this week, we repeat below the week's *Portfolio* price changes (today's are on page 21).

Share	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Weekly
1	+3	+2	+4	+3	+5		
2	+6	+5	+4	+2	+7		
3	+1	+3	+4	+5	+4		
4	+3	+5	+5	+2	+6		
5	+2	+2	+3	+4	+6		
6	+1	+4	+6	+2	+7		
7	+4	+5	+4	+3	+6		
8	+1	+5	+3	+5	+4		
9	+7	+6	+3	+2	+9		
10	+4	+2	+4	+3	+5		
11	+1	+3	+3	+5	+4		
12	+5	+3	+3	+5	+4		
13	+4	+5	+5	+2	+5		
14	+2	+3	+2	+5	+3		
15	+7	+5	+3	+3	+6		
16	+3	+6	+8	+3	+8		
17	+3	+2	+3	+3	+4		
18	+3	+4	+2	+5	+3		
19	+2	+3	+4	+4	+4		
20	+5	+5	+3	+1	+7		
21	+4	+2	+4	+5	+6		
22	+2	+4	+6	+1	+6		
23	+5	+5	+4	+1	+8		
24	+2	+1	+3	+5	+4		
25	+1	+5	+5	+3	+7		
26	+1	+5	+4	+4	+5		
27	+5	+3	+5	+3	+7		
28	+5	+5	+3	+3	+6		
29	+1	+3	+3	+6	+5		
30	+1	+5	+7	+3	+7		
31	+6	+5	+4	+2	+6		
32	+3	+5	+3	+5	+4		
33	+4	+6	+6	+1	+8		
34	+5	+2	+5	+3	+8		
35	+5	+6	+5	+2	+6		
36	+1	+3	+3	+6	+4		
37	+2	+5	+5	+2	+5		
38	+4	+5	+6	+2	+7		
39	+2	+1	+4	+4	+5		
40	+1	+8	+7	+2	+5		
41	+2	+3	+5	+3	+4		
42	+3	+5	+3	+1	+7		
43	+4	+4	+7	+1	+8		
44	+3	+6	+2	+5	+5		



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SATURDAY DECEMBER 17 1988

# Let slip the props of war!

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN ROGERS



**T**he fiftieth anniversary is next September; but already Victoria Tennant, Jane Seymour, Robert Mitchum, Hart Bochner and thousands of others are preparing for war. And the acting profession will not be alone: they also serve who only hire out the uniforms, weapons and other props, as Paul Charman discovers



Bob Worth, of Bermans and Nathans, film and theatrical costumiers: "War is a high-risk area for damages and losses. A lot of the stuff comes back blown up or bullet-ridden."

"There's Goering," Bob Worth says, pointing towards the bloated German air marshal's sickeningly ostentatious sky-blue parade coat. "But I can't see Speer or Hitler... they must be out."

These notable omissions in the racks of the military uniforms department are clear evidence that war clouds were already gathering over Bermans and Nathans, the leading film and theatrical costumiers, whose unremarkable warehouse in Camden holds a vast and timeless wardrobe of more than a million human garments, from the loin-cloth to the space suit.

And with the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War next year, the gaps testify to the film and television industry's well advanced spring offensive to mark the event.

In preparation for the anniversary, all the surviving materiel of the war — trucks, jeeps, aeroplanes, ambulances, staff cars, uniforms, and weapons — are being commandeered in their thousands for a vast dramatic re-run of the dire and bloody events from which they originate. Now the props of war, they are being dusted down and made ready for the biggest requisitioning of stock since the war itself. In the words of Andrew Allan, chairman of ITV's network drama committee: "Anybody who has anything that's khaki or a gas mask is going to make a fortune."

The country's leading military prop hirers can be counted on one hand, but between them they possess the largest collection of military hardware outside the Imperial War Museum. And for Bob Worth, a tireless 71-year-old still putting in a full day's work as Bermans' general manager, war broke out earlier this year.

No sooner had he met contracts to supply 500 military uniforms for Dennis Potter's adaptation of

Christabel, the true story of an Englishwoman who spent the war years in Germany, and another 700 for LWT's *Piece of Cake*, a television tale of Battle of Britain fighter pilots, than he was fighting to meet the company's biggest ever military order, a record \$500,000 contract for 6,450 outfits — enough to dress 10 infantry regiments of the British Army.

They were for *War and Remembrance*, a 30-hour Hollywood TV blockbuster in which Robert Mitchum, Jane Seymour, Victoria Tennant, Hart Bochner, John Gielgud and a cast of thousands go to war. It will be screened by ITV next autumn. The order docket, pinned to an office wall crowded with monochrome stills of the stars whom Bermans have dressed, read like a battle manifest: "Allied uniforms — 1,000; German Army, Navy, Air Force uniforms, political and brown-shirts — 1,000; Russian uniforms — 300; striped concentration camp outfits — 1,100... and so on. With a rental charge per outfit of between £50 and £70 per production, fees can be spectacular."

"We're already in the thick of the French Revolution because of the bicentenary," Worth says, with a strange air of timelessness. "And the Second World War is well under way. I reckon it will go on for a good four years once they start arriving at the different battles, the fall of France, Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain, right up to the Arnhem drop."

"Personally I find some of it a bit macabre." He pauses for a moment by a row of Nazi and SS caps, supplied to Bermans to this day by the Munich firm that was hatter to the Nazis.

"War," he points out, "is one of those high-risk areas for damages and losses. A lot of the stuff comes back blown up or bullet-ridden. You get a Sam Peckinpah or a

Rambo film, then you know you've got trouble."

Shooting wars can sometimes involve a military property master in considerable personal risk, particularly when he does his own stunts, like Mark Hanna, of the Old Flying Machine Company, based at Duxford in Cambridgeshire. A former RAF Phantom pilot now running his own flight of 10 wartime fighters, he flew his Spitfire under a 100ft semi-circular bridge for a stunt in *Piece of Cake*.

He began the collection back in 1981, with his father, a former leader of the Red Arrows. "We started with a single aeroplane, but it snowballed tremendously," he says.

Today, his collection comprises a Spitfire, an ME 109, a P51, a Mustang, a Corsair, a P40 Kitty Hawk, an Avenger torpedo bomber, a Harvard trainer, a Fokker DV II First World War biplane, a Stearman 1930s American trainer and one of the first jet fighters, a Meteor 8. He reports "a huge resurgence of interest in World War II and particularly in the planes which flew in the Battle of Britain. We used to do it as a hobby but we had to make it more commercial and make the planes pay for themselves". Now the Spitfire goes out at just under £2,000 an hour.

The high attrition rate on military props is particularly hard

to bear if you are a genuinely obsessive collector, like Tony Oliver of TLO, the company named after his initials. The son of an antique dealer, Oliver had a boyhood fascination for all things military which spawned what is today Britain's largest collection of military and period vehicles, some 200 in all, garaged on a rambling five-acre depot running alongside the M4 outside Windsor which passing motorists might mistake for a battlefield.

The charred wreck of a wartime German Kubelwagen jeep, set on fire and crushed by a tank during the making of *Indiana Jones III*, lies discarded several hundred yards from an alarmingly realistic model of a V2 rocket and rows of US Army trucks.

"What the Allies failed to do in five years took the film people just five minutes," he says, pointing at the wreck. Although show business is his bread and butter, it irks him that film companies often regard his lovingly restored convoy of military transport as destructible.

Oliver began in the mid 1950s with a large mail-order list and was contacted by Bermans, who were searching for a uniform for *The Heroes of Telemark*. He got on well with the costumiers, who recommended him as technical adviser for *The Battle of Britain*, marking the last major anniversary of the war, the 25th.

"I was struck by the dire

shortage of authentic World War Two vehicles, particularly German ones, and it grated on me how they used American half-tracks posing as German." He launched his vehicle collection with four German Volkswagen jeeps, which he bought for £1,000. One of them was an amphibious Schwimmwagen used by Lord

Strathcona and Mount Royal to ride to and fro from his Scottish island estate.

He travelled to Seville for a month before filming, searching for vehicles. "There was stuff everywhere, ambulances, staff cars, trucks, motorcycles, all German, left behind after the Spanish Civil War." At the end of the film

he bought them from the company and set up on his own.

"That grew into anything from searchlights to spy radios." But his most impressive vehicle is a fully operative 1944 US Stuart tank, which he bought from the

Continued overleaf



Tony Oliver, of TLO: "As we get further from the war, companies are demanding greater authenticity, specifying models and makes."



Peter Dinely, of Bapty's, the war stores: "We always have a lot of dead stock so we look forward to this Second World War thing taking off."

THE WORLD OF  
**INTERIORS**

JANUARY 1989

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LET SLIP THE PROPS OF WAR!

Continued from previous page

makers of *The Dirty Dozen*. It was one of eight sold to the production company by a Portsmouth marine breaker.

He is in mid-restoration of two 1930s Mercedes Type 200 touring cars, on which he has spent £80,000 in rebuilding. Research with Mercedes in Stuttgart revealed that one had a pedigree linking it directly to Hitler; records showed that it was commissioned for use as a staff car by the Reich chancellery in Berlin in 1937, with orders for special coachwork.

Demand for his vehicles is doubling as next year's movie wars get into gear. But with it come the increased risks of loss and damage. Although standing props like radios and searchlights go out at a weekly rental of 7.5 per cent of their replacement value, he charges between £100 and £150 a day for his "action vehicles".

**T**hey go through hell, those vehicles. "What you have to remember," he says, "is that you get film crews riding on the running boards hanging off doors, the windows blown out, the bodywork riddled with bullets, people having their lunch in the back... It's a constant headache. When you have cars as rare as the Phantom, the Steyer, the Hanomag and the Stoeber, they are simply irreplaceable. You just can't get the parts any more."

He told fortinly of a Mercedes 320 German staff car, valued at £75,000. An actor burnt out the starter motor and it had to be replaced with one from a Wolseley, thereby reducing its value to £20,000 at a stroke, he claims.

"Sometimes you get the money from the film company, but only after a lot of haggling. They just say 'Well, do you want to work again?' But I can't replace the vehicle." As a consequence, Oliver is now reluctant to hire out the most valuable quarter of his stock — including a £70,000 1930s Mercedes 300 SL tourer — to the film companies.

"As we get further away from the war," he observes, "companies are demanding a greater degree of authenticity about what they want, specifying exact models and makes." Writers, he says, are getting keener on detail now, following the example of Len Deighton, celebrated for his fastidiously detailed scripts — not only for *The Ispres File*, but also for the TV spy drama *Game, Set and Match*. "He wants to get every thing exact — right down to the colour of the bus tickets," Oliver says.

"At the moment there is a lot of nostalgia for the Thirties, Forties



Mark Hanna, of the Old Flying Machine Company, runs a flight of 10 wartime fighters and does his own stunts: "It's snowballed tremendously"

and Fifties — which is strange because they were years of war and depression. For my own piece of mind, I try to ensure that anything I offer is 100 per cent right."

In his office are piles of volumes on military history and bound copies of contemporary magazines such as *Life* and *Picture Post* which he uses for research. He is rarely beaten but it has been known, "I had an inquiry to find out the markings for a police car in wartime Turkey. I contacted the embassy and they couldn't help

and no amount of research could turn it up. I had to admit defeat."

Without the arms merchants no war can ever take place, and the Krupps of the movie industry are Bapty's, the biggest civilian armourer in the country. They have marched alongside Oliver for the past 25 years on nearly every war film since *The Dirty Dozen*.

A family firm run by Peter Dinley with fortress premises off the Harrow Road, north London, Bapty's is known in the business as "war stores". It is where the

film business goes for the hardware of war.

Dinley inherited the company from his father, a wartime MOD weapons specialist who launched the vast stock of 5,000 fully operational weapons by buying up army surplus after 1945. "Those were the days when you could buy a sten gun for two shillings or a Vickers machine gun for five bob", he says.

"But we are always buying. We've got the latest British Army rifle, the SA80... Hold on...

Somebody's taking out some firearms." Suddenly he heads towards the office door to investigate. "The paperwork has to be done correctly — in triplicate," he explains, "or we'll all end up in gaol."

With an arsenal of firearms from every country and every period, security is a constant headache. Apart from a stock of 10,000 muskets and swords dating from Waterloo, Bapty's "inner sanctum" houses enough working weaponry to equip a small army.

WHO'S SHOOTING WHAT

● **BBC:** *Road to War*, a major eight-part documentary tracing the origins of war, scheduled for the autumn; *The Futurist* to *Montecarlo*, BBC Enterprises co-production about an Italian town destroyed by the SS, in project stage.

● **ITV network:** *War and Remembrance*, 30 hours of television film, the Hollywood sequel to *Winds of War*, starring Robert Mitchum and Steven Berkoff and a Hollywood cast, scheduled for the autumn.

● **LWT:** *Wish Me Luck*, a second espionage series on British women spies in occupied France, starring Julian Glover, Jane Asher and Kate Buffery; *The Long-Haired Boy*, adaptation of Richard Hillary's novel, *The Last Enemy*, about a badly burnt wartime pilot.

● **TVS:** *Murderers Among Us* — the story of Simon Wiesenthal, a two-part mini series starring Ben Kingsley as the great Nazi hunter, with Renée Soutendijha and Craig T. Nelson, scheduled for the spring; *The Heroes*, co-production with Network 10 on Australia about a famous allied raid on Japanese-held Singapore, starring Paul Rhye, John Bach and John Hargreaves, scheduled for April.

● **YTV:** *Till We Meet Again*, saga of a French family who lives through both world wars, based on Judith Krantz's book.

● **Tyne Tees:** *A Nightingale Sang*, a wartime drama based on a story by C.P. Taylor and adapted by Jack Rosenthal about a cockney soldier's affect on two Tyneside sisters, starring Joan Plowright, Tom Watt, John Woodvine and Phyllis Logan, scheduled for April.

● **HTV:** *Pursuit*, based on the book by Robert L. Fish, the saga of a July conspirator who ends the war fighting for the establishment of Israel, starring Ben Cross and Veronica Hamel.

● **Granada:** *Countdown to War*, a major drama documentary in three parts, about the days leading up to the declaration of war; *After the War*, written by Frederic Raphael, a 10-part series on how the British professional middle classes faced the post-war years,

starring Anton Rodgers, Dennis Quilley and Susannah York, scheduled for April; *Pied Piper*, a two-hour TV film based on Nevil Shute's novel about an elderly English solicitor who rescues a group of children from occupied France; *The Heat of the Day*, a two-hour drama of Elizabeth Bowen's novel, adapted by Harold Pinter, a wartime story of a young English woman who discovers her lover is a Nazi, starring Michael York, Patricia Hodge and Michael Gambon, scheduled for the autumn.

● **Central:** *The Day War Broke Out*, a major documentary; *Tanamera*, a seven-hour series based on Noel Barber's best-selling novel about a love affair between an English boy and a Chinese girl in Singapore, starring Chris Bowen and Khyam Lee, scheduled for the New Year; *The Free Frenchman*, adaptation of Piers Paul Rad's book on the French Resistance.

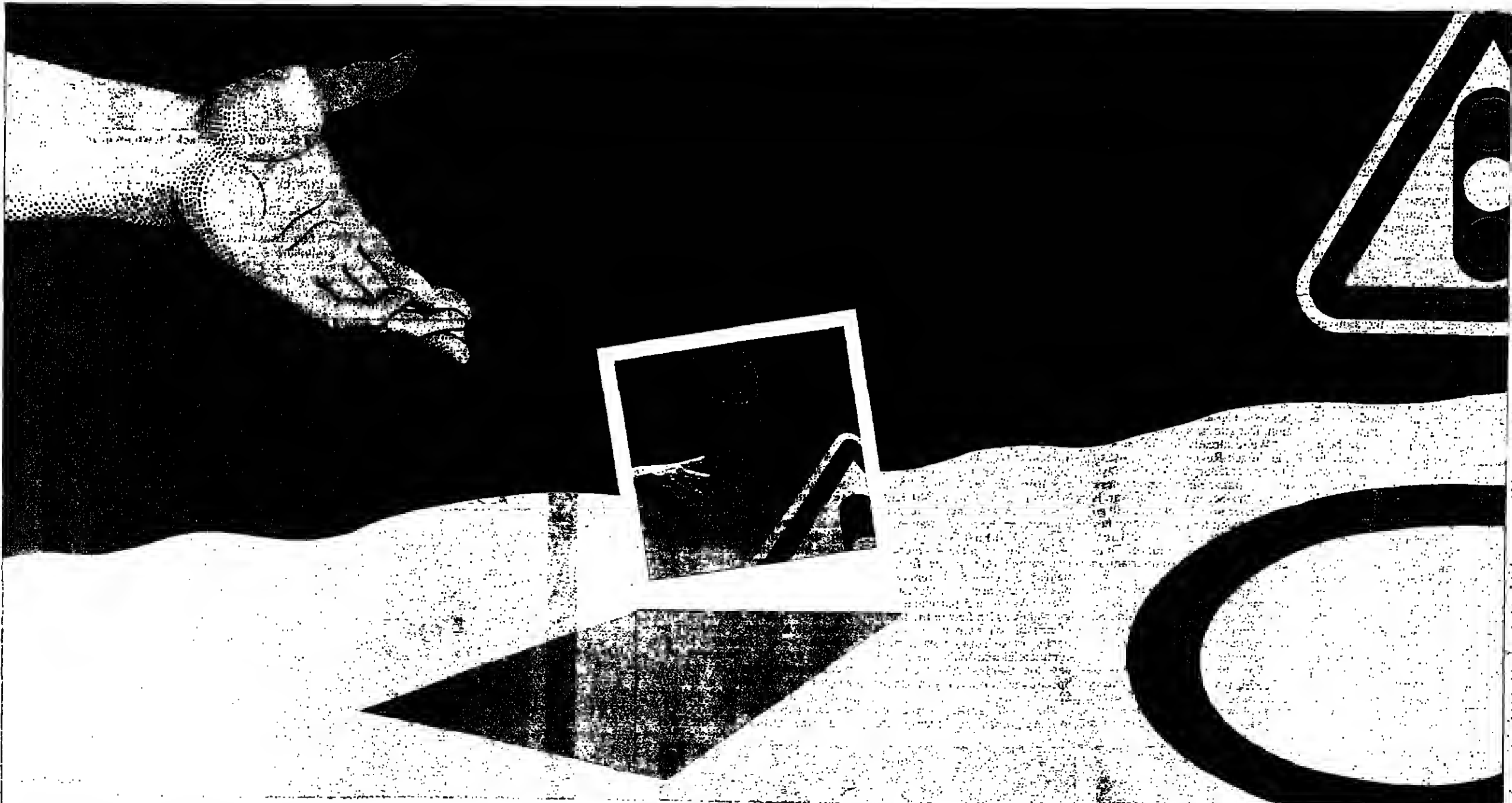
● **Independent TV Production:** *The Tenth Man*, adaptation of Graham Greene's story about the French Resistance in wartime Paris, starring Anthony Hopkins, Derek Jacobi and Cyril Cusack, made by Norman Rosemont, an American company, at Pinewood; *Inside the Gestapo*, a Palace Television co-production, based on the true story of a Belgian woman who worked as a Gestapo secretary by day and a resistance leader by night; *The English Lady*, a US television film about the Mitfords.

● **Feature films:** David Putnam's *Mammoth Sails*, the story of a Flying Fortress bomber based in East Anglia which flew 25 missions over Germany; *Hannah Senesh*, a Cannon production about an Israeli spy dropped behind enemy lines; *War Requiem*, Don Boyd's film adaptation of Benjamin Britten's famous work; *Sonia*, another US production featuring a concentration camp story; *Triumph*, a Ronnie Yaocov film about the Nazi persecution of Greek Jews; *The Final Chapter*, Branko Lustig's sequel to *The Great Escape*; *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, in which Harrison Ford comes face to face with Hitler at a Nuremberg rally.

Row upon row of battle-scarred Mausers, Schmeissers, Lee Enfields, carbines and tommy guns, many of which have seen active service, await despatch to the film set. They travel in iron boxes, guarded by a minder. The company also supplies a team of technicians, who advise on handling, blank-firing and security, and are often accompanied by Dinley's 20-year-old daughter Viktoria, said to be the youngest trainee armourer in the business. Bapty's also houses a vast

collection of military antiques and curios — from a suit of armour to a period French-letter packet. "We always have a lot of dead stock so we look forward to this Second World War thing taking off," Dinley says.

In preparation for the hostilities, Bapty's is ordering extra supplies of that last vital ingredient of a good war — blood. Literally gallons of it, made to their secret recipe and marketed under their trade name: Kensington Gore.



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THE ARTS

# Digging for unforgettable Cole

CHARLES SCHNEIDER



Scenes from a life: although Nat King Cole was the first black singer to win a large white following, when he intended to move his family into a WASP neighbourhood in Los Angeles, the residents mounted a campaign against them

The man who can lay claim to being one of the world's leading authorities on Nat King Cole lives in a modest semi-detached house in south London. There, in a first-floor room filled with album sleeves, Roy Holmes leads a collection of recordings which has been growing steadily since attending his first Nat King Cole concert in 1950.

Like many of his contemporaries, Holmes was spellbound by the blend of suave vocals and dazzling jazz piano solos. Now a commercial manager with an engineering firm, he has amassed thousands of Cole recordings, from scratched 78s to bizarre 16in discs recorded for exclusive use by American radio stations. The stacks of albums on the walls are neatly divided according to their country of origin, from Belgium to Japan.

Pride of place, however, goes to the card index system and charts on the table in the centre of the room. Holmes spends many of his evenings poring over them as he compiles a complete discography of Cole's work. The final product — including hundreds of obscure jazz recordings — will run to around 800 pages. He hopes to have it ready by 1990, the 25th anniversary of the singer's death from lung cancer.

Curiously, in all the times that

he saw Cole perform live, he never tried to meet him. "The thing that mattered to me was the music," he explains. "He was such a marvellous artist, I was frightened that if I came face to face with him that I'd find he was a let-down, like so many show business people."

Had Holmes plucked up the courage to go backstage, he is unlikely to have been disappointed. The man who emerges from *Arena's* 90-minute documentary, *The Unforgettable Nat King Cole*, appears to have been every bit as courteous and relaxed in private as he was on record.

"He was the calmest, most gentlemanly man I'd ever come across," Jo Lustig says. The documentary's producer, Lustig, was also Cole's Press agent during a European tour in 1960. "Every-one else would get excited around him, but he never did. He was always under control."

Lustig says his film is the first to be made with the permission of Cole's widow, Maria, who gave her consent after seeing the earlier *Arena* study of Billie Holiday. Armed with her blessing, Lustig was able to line up interviews with artists including Frank Sinatra, Quincy Jones and Ella Fitzgerald.

Oscar Peterson is also on hand to explain the importance of Cole's piano style. Even today, few

**The life of jazz musician Nat King Cole is celebrated on television on Friday in *Arena*, the first film on him to be authorized by his widow. Clive Davis reports on the facts and myths behind the star's often troubled career**

of the people who buy re-issues of "Mona Lisa" and "Nature Boy" realize that the man who sang them happened to be one of the most important pianists in jazz history. Besides pioneering the piano/bass/guitar format — later used by Peterson himself — Cole developed a fluid keyboard technique copied by many players of the Forties and Fifties.

Born in Montgomery, Alabama, he began his career as a pianist in Chicago, heavily influenced by Earl Hines. In 1937 he moved to Los Angeles as part of the touring company of Ennie Blake's revue, *Shuffle Along*. Soon afterwards the celebrated King Cole Trio made its debut, with Oscar Moore on guitar and Wesley Prince on double bass.

Exactly when Nat King Cole, the vocalist, came into being has been the subject of a good deal of myth-making. The *Arena* film mischievously includes a clip from a 1955 short, *The Nat King*

*Cole Story*, which shows the star re-enacting the old legend of how a drunk badgered him into singing during a performance at a Los Angeles venue. According to the myth, the song was "Sweet Lorraine", the year 1940 or 1942. Duke Ellington's lyricist, Don George, was among those who muddied the waters even further when he moved the location from the West Coast to New York and had Cole standing in for an errant Billie Holiday.

Other permutations of the myth have come and gone. The truth, according to Maria Cole and Roy Holmes, is that Cole had long been in the habit of singing with the trio. "In later years," Maria says, "the story about how he started singing grew up, and he just went along with it. He didn't see any reason out of it."

Cole's career as a singer finally took off with the 1943 song, "Straighten Up and Fly Right". From then, on he enjoyed a series

of hits including "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" and "The Christmas Song". The latter, written by Mel Tormé and Robert Wells in 1945, was the first of the famous ballads set to strings.

As Cole's commercial standing increased, the trio — and his jazz training — were slowly pushed into the background. But his musical roots were not totally neglected. Holmes's discography contains literally scores of unknown jazz items recorded with leading players of the bop generation. Already under contract to Capitol, Cole was often obliged to play under a pseudonym. While the label notes might name the pianist as "Aye Guy", "Lord Calvert", "Shorty Nadine" or "Sam Schmaltz", the *cognoscenti* knew that they were really listening to Cole himself.

Holmes assumes that Capitol — whose early fortunes were built on the singer's commercial work — turned a blind eye to the moonlighting.

But if his singing career was a story of almost unbroken success, he had to contend with the handicaps imposed by racial discrimination. Though he was the first black singer to win a large white following, he never quite enjoyed the social status to match. In 1948, residents of an exclusive WASP neighbourhood in Los Angeles mounted a campaign to stop him and his family moving into the district. His adopted daughter, Carol, still recalls seeing the word "Nigger" hurled into the front lawn.

The most brutal incident was still to come. In 1956 he was attacked by racialists while performing before a segregated audience in his native town. When Cole politely insisted on playing down the affair, he was condemned as an Uncle Tom by some black newspapers. Nightclub owners in Harlem reportedly removed his records from their juke-boxes.

Race was also the main factor when his weekly television show was taken off the air in 1957 after just over a year. Though audience figures were rising, sponsors were reluctant to support a black performer, prompting Cole's quip: "Madiso Avcouc is scared of the dark." The surviving footage, with glimpses of guests such as Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee and Coleman Hawkins, shows what a

marvellous opportunity was lost. Cole's hopes of building a career in films met a similar fate. Mainly confined to black roles, such as portraying W. C. Handy in *St Louis Blues*, he found suitable parts hard to come by. Lustig observes that it would have been a different story today: Cole at least succeeded in opening doors for later generations.

Whether those reverses hastened his premature death in 1965 is open to question. A highly contentious biography by the American author, James Haskins, recently described him as a lanky man, manipulated by those nearest to him and "profoundly saddened by life". The *Arena* film, with its clips of sunny home movies, gives a markedly different impression.

The music, in any case, will outlive the controversy. Maria Cole is already talking of plans for the 25th anniversary of her husband's death. Meanwhile Holmes, who helped compile an album of unreleased Capitol material earlier this year, estimates that there are some 200-300 items still locked away in the company's archives. The next generation of Nat King Cole fans obviously has plenty to look forward to.

● The Unforgettable Nat King Cole, an *Arena* special, will be shown on BBC2 on Friday, 9-10.30pm.

## Life is full of banana peels, and farce celebrates humanity's slipshaps and slidings in *Ruminations*

(Broadhurst Theatre), his first full-length farce for the theatre, Neil Simon sends his characters zooming to the heights of hilarity. At an upscale house in an upscale New York suburb, feisty reigns. The first of four couples arrive for a 10th wedding anniversary party, to find that the hostess and servants have disappeared, the banquet is uncooked, and the host has tried to commit suicide. He has only grazed his ear and passed out on a few valiums, but the characters' imaginations run riot. The host is the Deputy Mayor of New York, the couples are both lawyers, and suicide is a crime: the reputations of all could be ruined and they might go to jail.

The first couple tries to hide the potential scandal when the second arrive, and so on until four couples are involved in a cover-up that has them cooking and eating the party food and matching wits with the police. Along the way they acquire or aggravate various physical ailments and emotional grudges, and do enough running around to qualify for a marathon. One of them comments: "I feel like I'm at the Alamo." This frivolous, forgiving celebration of what fools we mortals be is directed by Gene Saks and acted by a winning ensemble with precision and relish.

Simon was brave, after his autobiographical trilogy beginning with *Brighton Beach Memoirs* finally won him recognition as a serious playwright, to risk farce. America's puritanical heritage is still strong enough to lend farce a disreputable aura — laughter for its own sake is a sin — and he was accordingly chastized by some critics.

Mixed notices won't kill *Ruminations* at the box-office, but they may do it the first Broadway drama of the season, Michael Weller's *Spoils of War* (Music Box Theatre). Weller has previously created, in such plays as *Moonchildren* and *Loose Ends*, portraits of the Baby Boom generation confronted with too many choices and too few standards by which to make them. *Spoils of War* moves back in time, to the generation of Leftist idealists who felt lost in the America of the Fifties. In a rave-winning perfor-

## Playing farce and loose

The first Broadway drama of the season has a bumpy reception



Kate Nelligan: mother, femme fatale, in *Spoils of War*

mance, Kate Nelligan plays the femme fatale of a pre-Second World War commune, divorced and struggling to give her teenage son an elite education. Her ex-husband has climbed into the upper middle class, and the play's focus is upon the son's effort to get his parents reconciled. With the family story and socio-political background the material is promising, but Weller delivers an act and a half of exposition leading to an anti-climactic parental meeting and then it peters out. Ripely alluring and a dynamo as the mother, backed by a good cast, Nelligan just doesn't get enough support from the play.

Thriving off-Broadway is A.R. Gurney Jr's new play, *The Cocktail Hour* (Promenade Theatre). Its quality falls slightly on the positive side between his best plays, *The Dining Room* and *The Middle Ages*, and his recent disappointments *Sweet Sue* and *Another Antigone*. Gurney has returned to the milieu and characters of his expertise — upper-middle-class WASPs — in a family comedy about a son visiting his elderly parents to seek their blessing to produce a play he has written about them.

*The Cocktail Hour's* weakness is the bland character of the son and the actor chosen for the role — mother, father

and sister are keenly written and played. Mother, for example, worries about responses to WASP characters: "Critics don't like us. They think we're all Republicans and all alcoholics and all superficial. Only the last is true." Two hours of this kind of chat, with characters working through problems at the family bar, pass pleasantly.

The Manhattan Theater Club has opened its season with a charmed double-header. John Patrick Shanley, winner of last year's Best Original Screenplay Oscar for *Moonstruck*, has written another operatic love story in *Italian American Reconciliation*. Though his ex-wife Janice shot his dog and then took aim at him, Huey Maximilian Bonfigliana is still so in love with her that he begs his best friend, Aldo Scalcio, to intercede. The moonlit balcony scene in which Aldo softens up Janice — a descendant of Katherine and Beatrice — and Huey comes to reclaim his manhood as a comic cousin to Cyrano de Bergerac, may be a bromide but Shanley makes it into an elixir.

MT's second hit, which is moving to Broadway in January, is Richard Greenberg's amusing and thoughtful *Eastern Standard*. Four upwardly-mobile young Manhattanites (a stockbroker involved in an inside trading scandal, her gay brother who is a television writer with AIDS, a gay artist, and an architect disgusted with his profession's contribution to urban blight and homelessness), meet and fall in love, with interference from a waitress on the make and a schizophrenic bag lady.

The characters examine their culture and their consciences, the youthful quartet concluding that: "We're full-fledged adults and we've done almost nothing correctly." The dialogue has fluency and punch, as when one character describes his conservative mother: "There's not a revolution in history that would have failed to execute her." The characters are piquantly drawn, the story surprising in its tough and tender turns, and, at 30 years of age Greenberg looks like the most promising young American playwright of the decade.

Holly Hill

## A GREAT CHALLENGE PROFIT FROM HUMAN VALUES

WHAT IS IT?

For decades, writers have been observing the decline in human values and saying "we must do something". Social and political leaders have been commenting on the increase in alienation, hopelessness and violence and saying, "we must do something". Philosophers have been observing the rise in cynicism and ruthlessness and saying "we must do something". And today, most people, in all levels of society, weary of the pressure of harmful influences on themselves, their families and their children are saying "we must do something".

WHAT IS IT THAT HAS TO BE DONE?  
... and by whom? ... and how?

I have a vision. A vision inspired by the same tensions and pressures of today's life that have created the problems. Yes! I believe the problem offers the solution. I want to look at all communication techniques used so successfully to achieve ever increasing material prosperity for the human race, and employ them in a new role to help bring happiness, harmony and tranquility to all those who are so desperately seeking them. And I want YOU to be a part of it. A part of a great solution.

THE BIRTH OF A NEW INDUSTRY

Now that we have conquered new frontiers in the "Atom Age" and the "Jet Age" and the "Computer Age" why can't we pioneer a new "Age of human well-being"? This can be a highly profitable and extensively rewarding new industry. Profitable industries have supported every major development in social life in the 20th Century. But in the process, simple human values like responsibility, co-operation, tolerance, courage, patience, hope and many others, have largely been left to fend for themselves until now. Just as the pharmaceutical industry exists for our physical health so we can create a profitable industry to promote our psychic and social well-being. Pause and think about the New Brave World where technology, commerce and industry are all at the service of "human values", rather than human values being slaves to commercial interests and industrial motives.

THE FIRST STEP

This concept has become my passionate conviction and I have devoted nearly two decades to developing the idea into marketable products. Many artists, graphic designers and writers have been commissioned to create effective and positive messages to promote human values. Swiss experts have been commissioned to develop a machine that can project a variety of TV commercial style, 60 second films to evoke desired emotions, selected by the individual. If you are bursting with anger, or subdued with lack of drive, there is an audio-visual message stored in the machine which should help you overcome the unwelcome feeling. A well known British graphic designer has been commissioned to develop human values symbols similar to traffic signs to express and inspire great human qualities. All these creations and developments and the theory behind them are put together in a book called WHAT IS IT? As the first step and the prototype product line for this revolutionary industry.

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AN OPEN INVITATION

I am inviting all caring, influential, responsible people everywhere to read this book, get to know it well and to form their own ideas of its value. I am sure that many other institutions and individuals will soon join this crusade. Industrialists, Scientists, Political and Social leaders, Legislators, Councilors, Entrepreneurs, Businessmen, Book distributors and publishers, Communicators, Writers, Critics, Film makers, Musicians, Artists, Designers, Psychologists, Psychiatrists corporations and institutions could initiate their own efforts in developing this new industry. I invite the media to play its important and historic role in employing the idea as I have explained in the book WHAT IS IT?, and help in spreading universal awareness about it.

You will find in the book a full explanation of a great new idea and many beautifully illustrated examples of how it works in simple ways to reinforce the positive human qualities. This has nothing to do with cultism, religion, philosophy or politics. It has everything to do with the simple human values which are so neglected and undernourished today. It is an idea with tremendous implications. Please take it seriously.

JOIN THE GREAT CHALLENGE

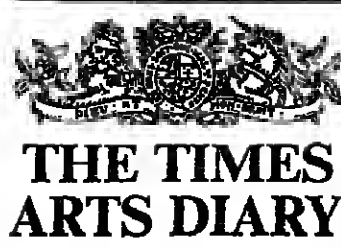
History has shown us that people of influence, vision and goodwill can do much to hasten the spread of new ideas and new movements. Now was a new movement needed so urgently as this. I am inviting and urging you to join with me to help in the early stages of this great new movement, using your personal influence, your professional skill and your financial power in whatever ways suit you best. More power to you.

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THE ARTS 2



THE TIMES ARTS DIARY Firm faith in youth

A bust-up at one of London's most venerable publishing houses has given the book world its youngest potentate. Felicity Rubinstein, aged 30, was this week appointed managing director of Macmillan London. Last month Philippa Harrison quit the post saying she could not work under a new structure in which the firm takes over sales and marketing of Pan, Sidgwick, and Macmillan's children's imprint.

No one can remember when a major publishing house last had a chief executive aged 30, but Nicholas Byam Shaw, managing director of Macmillan's holding company, observed: "The idea that only 45-year-olds can do the big jobs is bunkum... I'm 54 and I feel between 80 and 90."

Restoring Marble Hill House, in Twickenham, has taken John Jacob, director of the Ivesh Bequest, down some strange avenues. One of the house's original pieces, a pier table, was found resold to the owner of a Bandi Beach hairdresser chain. But the chase had not been simple: "The dealer had not only changed his address, but also his sex."

Dorrit accolades

The British are still coming. Pitted against Roger Rabbit, Tucker, and Wings of Desire, Christiane Edzard's Little Dorrit has been voted the best film of this year.



Margolyes Guinness by the Los Angeles Film Critics Association. Alec Guinness was named best supporting actor for the film and Miriam Margolyes runner-up to the best supporting actress.

Paper chasers

Arts Council secretary general Luke Rittner has a thing about the waste of paper at 105 Piccadilly. Minutes from grant panel meetings, backed by officers' reports, frequently cover more than 100 pages. These are then duplicated for each member of the council. Rittner's plan was to issue members with easily digestible, two-page summaries of panel recommendations. The council supported the summary idea, with one reservation: that members should get the full reports as well. Result: 102-page reports will be common from January.

Andrew Billen

Upstaged by the shadow of Irving

Leopold Lewis's melodrama holds a permanent place in the history of English acting, as the work that catapulted Henry Irving to fame. The photographs of Irving in the role of Mathias, his annotated prompt copy, and recollections of eyewitnesses (all collected in David Mayer's 1980 Manchester University Press edition) give the play a further claim as an almost move-by-move record of a legendary performance.

David O'Shea and Simon Usher have plainly ransacked the Mayer text for their Leicester revival, as much in its music cues and stage directions as in the Irving impersonation of the lead performer. At the nightmare re-enactment of the murder, just as Irving prescribed, the bells escape from inside Mathias's head and progress stereophonically across the set so that you can almost see the Polish Jew on his sledge approaching the waiting axeman.

What the production entirely

THEATRE

The Bells Haymarket Studio, Leicester

fails to do is to recreate the inner need for such effects. As a studio show, it has to find some alternative to the spectacular realism of Lyceum melodrama; and Brian Vahey's solution, unfortunately, is chamber guignol: a raked black stage with upstage windows through which new arrivals are seen ominously battling their way through the snow to a dialogue-obliterating apparition of the victim. Mathias lets out a shriek of horror at the sight of the Santa Claus-like toy figure wobbling across the back wall.

The rest of the company support him as an equally doll-like assembly of Victorian stereotypes,

periodically answering him in unison chorus and deluging the lines in unmotivated laughter. David Gant's Mathias is another great laugh; baring wolfish fangs to the company and then turning to us with looks of stricken dread. The interest of this character is that of a hero-villain: a man who killed for the sake of his beloved family.

What you get from Gant, apart from the space-filling gestures taken from the Irving pictures, is furtive and ruthless self-preservation with a strong dash of cackling villainy. Even when embracing his daughter, he comes over less as a doting parent than as a child molester.

Gravin Bryars has supplied some doom-laden new musical atmospherics, but retained the original wedding song which goes to the tune of "Where Has My Little Dog Gone?"

Irving Wardle



Legendary: Sir Henry Irving as Mathias, the role that made his name

Nice tunes, gorgeous waistcoat

Bryan Ferry London Palladium

As ever he cut a stylish dash, threading his way across a stage that looked like a cross between the sets of Raiders Of The Lost Ark and a Duran Duran video. Dressed in a Victorian paterfamilias coat, patterned waistcoat, pumps and white socks, the man who once promised "to make the cognoscenti think" was at it again.

But to think about what? So much of Ferry's repertoire, like his suave demeanour, was coated in a hard, durable gloss that tended to obscure depth of meaning as much as it did any underlying faults. Most of the songs, new and old, were bold musical designs of simple, sleek symmetry, huilt on cyclical four or five chord sequences which ended in codas repeated ad infinitum. This was the pattern of "Slave To Love", "Boys And Girls", "Kiss And Tell", "Avalon" and many others, which once they had made their initial statement seemed to exist in a vacuum, bereft of further movement or development.

His band was a model of technical excellence with a mightily quiffed guitarist, Jeff Thall,

ROCK

who looked like a refugee from Blade Runner, and female backing vocalists alluringly dressed in slinky sequined tubes and Aztec pineapple head-dresses.

Ferry's movements were a bit creaky, but so far as one was able to tell, he seemed to be enjoying himself. There was no danger of him breaking sweat as he sang in that never-stylished half-yawn half-yodel, but in no time his dark hair was flopping about his eyes and, as well as a final enco of "Do The Strand", the set was graced with a fair smattering of old Roxy Music favourites. "Love Is The Drug" suffered from a perfunctory vocal performance, but "Ladytron", from the first album, still succeeded in conjuring windswept futuristic images, while the coldly menacing tone of "In Every Dream Home A Heartache" provided the one moment when there was a palpable sense of drama from the stage.

For better or worse, Ferry is the man who first developed a credible strand of rock with an upmarket designer tag on its coat-tails. As he matures, the old battles between style and content seem to have been resolved in favour of a timeless if rather bland elegance.

David Sinclair

DANCE

The Snow Queen Sadler's Wells

Think yourself lucky. All over America dance companies turn at Christmas to hundreds and hundreds of productions of The Nutcracker as a sure-fire way of raking in audiences. Here we have more diversity, and David Bintley's Snow Queen serves the same purpose at Sadler's Wells as Cinderella at Covent Garden and the Festival Hall's Nutcracker.

It is virtually the story of the fairy's kiss: a boy picked out for doom while still a child. Bintley has shamelessly raided the variety of favourite ballets to provide inspiration for his incidents, and has welded them very efficiently in a colourful show.

A big element in the baller's success is the score, composed by Bramwell Tovey using music by Mussorgsky as his raw material. This provides a rich flow of melody, strong dance rhythms and a powerful atmosphere.

All the leading roles have three or four interpreters this week. I saw Chene Williams as an elegantly austere Snow Queen and Gertie Jacobson as her innocent victim, at his best in the most ebullient and saddest moments.

His sweetest Gerda was played by Bonnie Moore. There was a tightness about her shoulders which detracted from her otherwise proficient dancing. She acted with tearful earnestness when searching for her lost lover, but in the happy earlier scenes she lacked the warmth and conviction of the company regulars.

John Percival

Cello in one hand, baton in the other

CONCERTS

Rostropovich/LSO Barbican

It takes considerable stamina to play in one programme the solo part in Shostakovich's First Cello Concerto and conduct the Tenth Symphony. Mstislav Rostropovich not only did it, he poured so much energy into each performance that he left this listener feeling pretty drained by the end.

It seems that the experience of playing the concerto urged him on to new heights: this was the first time I've found Rostropovich the conductor really comparable with Rostropovich the soloist.

There were odd moments in the Tenth Symphony when I felt that points were being a little strained (in the first movement's eerie flute theme, Rostropovich's rubato nearly stopped the music altogether), but in spite of such momentary lapses the performance moved forward with enormous impetus, concluding with a tremendous sense of achievement.

Rostropovich tells us that the more he is involved with Shostakovich's music, the less he feels that he ever knew him personally. But the weakening of

the personal tie seems to have given Rostropovich's conducted interpretations an objective grandeur they formerly lacked.

In the Tenth Symphony, Rostropovich could have bid farewell to the kind of excesses that marred his earlier readings of the Fifth. But he has never been other than master of the First Cello Concerto, and with Maxim Shostakovich in charge of the accompaniment, he showed again what a tight knit musical drama this is.

Stephen Johnson



Stamina: Mstislav Rostropovich

Edward Downes has a characteristic jiggling of the shoulders which usually seems to mean "this is tremendous fun because it's noisy and it's why I like being a conductor". It happened in the finely pointed performance of Holst's Perfect Fool ballet music which ended his Studio 7 concert, but not before. And that may be because the other two works are of the kind that ought to be superb but somehow failed to connect.

It is always a pleasure to hear Ernst Kovacic, with his apparently limitless technique and his spirited musicality, and it was a double pleasure to find him tackling a rarely played English work. Ber-

One staggered away from this hyperbolic performance of Mahler's Fifth Symphony with mixed feelings. For many in the hall it was perhaps (in different places) louder, faster, slower, more luridly coloured, more extreme in sudden dynamic contrasts, than any Mahler they had ever heard before: hence the feverish reception for Klaus Tennstedt and the London Philharmonic.

The orchestra certainly deserved that. It gave Tennstedt every ounce of its sonority, lasted this Grand National of symphonic trials superbly by calling on massive reserves of stamina (clearly

BBCPO/Downes Studio 7, Manchester

nard Stevens's Violin Concerto of 1943 was praised to the skies at its first performance. It is easy to see why.

There is a confidence and a clarity in its every detail, a bold economy of material, and a strong design. But it is just as easy to see why it has failed to establish a firm place in the repertoire. Stevens was using a language that had been all but exhausted by other British composers, notably Vaughan Williams; and the strikingly individual voices of Britten and Tippett

were just emerging at the time when Stevens achieved recognition. Fashion went another way. John Simon's orchestral Requiem of 1984, op 42, was composed in 1984 under the influence of Orwell's novel.

One can see why it caught the eye of a BBC score-reader, with its assured stylistic coherence and scrupulously balanced form. In the event, a certain blandness of orchestral colour impeded the searing passion the composer evidently intended. And, again, fashion seems to have gone another way.

David Fallows

rather ugly. It now verges on caricature: Neurosis in Disneyland.

The heavyweight textures worked better in the second movement and the finale, where the sheer vigour of the reading hid the absence of charm. The Adagietto, too, was an oasis of limpid gentleness and understatement. But the Funeral March, very slow and cumbersome, lost that sense of inexorable motion possessed by all the best hearses, and the scherzo was so stridently toned that one forgot to notice how virtuosic the playing was.

Richard Morrison

LPO/Tennstedt Festival Hall

those weeks of Messiaen rehearsals have not sapped strength too severely), and followed Tennstedt's gestures - sometimes none too clear in the mundane matter of keeping time - like hawks. The technical assurance, particularly from the brass, was admirable.

However, this conductor's interpretation, though undoubtedly sincerely offered, often came over as synthetic, over-charged, exaggerated and - in the bars, blaring fortissimo which it constantly demanded from the horns -

Choir celebration tinged by sorrow

Monteverdi Choir/Gardiner Queen Elizabeth Hall

John Eliot Gardiner's Monteverdi Choir, ooh celebrating its silver jubilee season, has over the years established new standards in choral singing, with its keen-edged rhythm, pure pitching and blend, and a style of voice production that projects positively, even occasionally aggressively. All those qualities were found in this concert, which the musicians spontaneously dedicated to the victims of the Armenian earthquake; and by and large they were reflected also in the orchestral playing of the London Baroque Soloists, though in this instance that was not without the odd blip.

The major work was Beethoven's Mass in C, and from the beginning Gardiner's care in shaping a phrase to achieve maximum dramatic effects was made evident. The way in which the Kyrie opened soaring, as it were, from its quiet beginnings into an imposing arch, was mightily impressive; and the meticulous control of expressions Gardiner showed throughout, here holding back the

power, their unleashing it in overwhelming fashion, suited this wonderfully positive and dramatic statement of faith perfectly. Its cause was also helped by a team of solo singers which really was a team. Elzbieta Szmytka's soprano shone a particularly radiant light over the music, while the mezzo-soprano Eirian James, the Finnish tenor Risto Saarman, and the bass Alastair Miles sang with innate understanding both of the work and of each other.

Mozart occupied the rest of the programme. First there was the intense D minor Kyrie, K341, no small work itself, whose predominantly sombre colours, conveyed by its orchestration as much as anything else, seemed apt for the Armenian dedication. It was followed by the Symphony No 39 in E flat, which was graced with details like the dawningly slow opening Adagio and a beautifully floated principal theme in the slow movement, but marred by an occasional looseness of ensemble. It was, however, the kind that results not from sloppiness but from the sheer tension of the event.

Stephen Pettitt

ON MONDAY: The answers to The Times Musical Challenge, and the winner of the trip to New York

Republicans in the foyer

TELEVISION

Arms (BBC2) was the programme in which the BBC succeeded in interviewing Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein - in a vox pop role as amateur theatre critic in a crowded foyer. It went to prove how narrow is the dividing line between theatre and politics in the work of Field Day, the pioneering Irish company which has been testing Irish myths and rewriting the country's past in its imaginative productions. (The Archbishop of Armagh also turned up in the foyer, pointing out their show's factual inaccuracies about his predecessors in a jovially good-humoured manner.)

"A Trojan horse in our midst" was how one spectator described the company when it performed in Londonderry, in the Guildhall

which is crammed with images of England and the Union. In "Making History", Field Day tells the story of Hugh O'Neill, the 16th century chieftain who fought and lost a battle of Irish chieftains against Britain. The interest is not just in his story but in what subsequent generations have made of it, for he has become a symbol of Irish nationalism, although he was educated and ennobled in England and was married to an English Protestant. His rebellion was short-lived, yet Irish history has made it bear a considerable weight.

The extracts we saw from Brian

Friel's play punched home this view of historical distortion by having O'Neill debate with the Archbishop who was to be his first biographer. "But will you tell the truth?" "I'll try to tell the truth... but are truth and falsity, the proper criteria?"

Field Day, however, takes its investigations further than the stage by publishing pamphlets, tracts, and now, most ambitiously, an anthology of Irish writing from 550AD to the present. The company's work felt like a cold breath of some air on the over-heated face of Ireland: "There's a hunger for whatever it is we're peddling," said Brian Friel.

William Holmes

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RECORDS

# Taking Beethoven seriously

CLASSICAL

Beethoven: Symphonies, 1-9; Overtures  
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Beethoven: Late Choral Music  
Ambrosian Singers,  
LSO/Tilson Thomas.  
CBS MK78404 (1CD)

Muti's complete set of Beethoven Symphonies, compiled in Philadelphia over the last three years, would make a good Christmas present either for admirers of the Italian's high-powered musicianship (of which there are many), or for those who like Beethoven the old-fashioned way.

Massive orchestral sonorities, recorded in a broad, generalizing acoustic, tempos either orthodox or on the slow side; a strong emphasis on orchestral discipline to which the Philadelphia Orchestra responds with precision and power — these, rather than any unusual interpretative or spiritual characteristics, are the hallmarks of the set.

Muti often maintains an unerring, metronomic rigidity throughout a movement: the First's finale works well like that (in a Rossinian overtone sort of way), but the *Eroica*'s first movement certainly does not: the refusal to slow even a fraction for the development's great climax and the plaintive oboe theme that follows robs the moment of its awe. Yet in the same symphony — in the scherzo's trio — is a classic demonstration of how well the Philadelphia wind principals (a sweetly-blended bunch) seize the opportunity to phrase elegantly, if



NICK ROGERS

Unusual choice and imaginative treatment: Michael Tilson Thomas conducts the LSO and the Ambrosian Singers in a collection of Beethoven's late choral works

they are given the space. The Scherzo of the Seventh is another place where lightness and a few deft phrasings bring welcome contrast.

Not one of the music world's most natural humorists, Muti seems to miss the wit and the *buffo* fun in, for instance, the Fourth's finale, by pressing the textures too heavily; and his deadpan conception of the *Pastoral*'s third movement brings a new meaning to the words "peasants' merrymaking".

The Fifth Symphony responds better to this massive, serious approach. But here, even though

the first movement is briskly paced, there is a soggy about the rhythms. The *Pastoral*'s first movement also rests too comfortably on a smooth, sumptuous upholstery of string sound; though Muti brings a crushing weight to bear effectively on the Storm.

Perhaps he is most successful in the Ninth. The first movement is colossally conceived — there is more than a hint of Verdi about the crushing development build-up, with timpani pounding ominously to the front of the orchestral balance — and Muti rumpages through the scherzo.

(though his perky woodwind in the trio provide a neat contrast). But he handles the slow movement with great sensitivity and delicacy, and the finale is treated in a flexible, operatic *scena* style which seems cogent and persuasive.

Solti's new recording of the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies offers a revealing comparison with Muti, because Solti, too, favours extraordinarily sustained textures — every chord given its full metrical value and more — and a thick string sound. But in the Fifth, Solti somehow finds much

more rhythmic bite, even within his majestically deliberate pacing. Perhaps the Chicago strings are a shade more brilliant in attack; certainly the cellos and basses are given a fearfully tubby presence on this recording. And in the Fourth, the bustling passage work is delivered with exemplary clarity, for all the orchestral weight behind it.

To turn from these supercharged American orchestras to the period instruments of the Academy of Ancient Music, on Christopher Hogwood's new recording of the Sixth Symphony

(*Pastoral*), is to enter a gentler, and perhaps more innocent world. Hogwood does nothing remarkable to push the first movement along like a jolly two-step, but in its original instrumental colours, the symphony suddenly seems a fresher experience — and an altogether less complicated work to interpret.

The slow movement occasionally lapses into blandness — more pasteurized than *pastoral* — but later there is some superbly pert woodwind playing, particularly from the oboist, Frank de Bruine, and the storm is convinc-

ingly done, with hard-headed timpani sticks making a cracking contribution.

The most imaginative treatment of Beethoven in this batch of recordings, however — and the most unusual choice of music — comes on Michael Tilson Thomas's collection of Late Choral Music. The largest item here is the incidental music Beethoven wrote in 1811 for Kotzebue's play *König Stephan*, which, because of the play's Hungarian nationalist context and because the performances opened a new theatre in Budapest, has far more inches of exotic colour than are usually found in Beethoven's music.

The lovely women's chorus prefaced by a flute solo over pizzicato strings seems as if it might belong in *Aida*, while the grandiose but odd Victory March — which starts with just two horns and timpani, then develops into a ruminous orchestral romp — harks back to Handel and looks forward to Berlioz at the same time.

Tilson Thomas handles this music vividly, with plenty of rousing accelerandos, sudden crescendos and (from the Ambrosian Singers) much clipped, effective articulation. The disc also contains the marvellously pictorial *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*, as well as choral pieces ranging in mood from the hymn-like *Opferlied* (Lorna Haywood admirably steady in the soprano solo) to the jovial *Bundestied*, which, with its humplimus but joyous accompaniment for wind band and its "Student Prince" sort of tune, must have been the prototype for hundreds of later German choral songs, right up to Carl Orff. But Beethoven can hardly be blamed for that.

Richard Morrison

KEITH MORRIS

Strings have a bad name in jazz. Hardly anyone approved of Charlie Parker's alto-and-strings sides in the early Fifties, even though they emphasized a particular aspect of his personal lyricism; a couple of years ago, Wynton Marsalis's *Hot House Flowers* was generally said to be his worst recording to date, a judgement posterity may well stand on its head. In between times came the only with-strings session that everyone has a good word for: Stan Getz's *Focus*, composed and arranged by the great Eddie Sauter, whose originality allowed him to eliminate all the clichés and create a universe from scratch.

While Ian Carr does not quite achieve the heights of that masterpiece, "Northumbrian Sketches" — the 33-minute concerto for three soloists and string orchestra which is the centrepiece of *Old Heartland* — nevertheless is a very substantial work, in which he also manages to find a perfectly workable solution to the old problems of reconciling the pre-composed orchestral parts with the needs of the improvising soloist.

He does it the hard way, too, without a rhythm section, gambling on his own ability to infuse his writing with suf-

## Heart strings

JAZZ

Ian Carr: *Old Heartland* (MMC 1016)  
Mark Wood: *La Mezzola* (MMC 1015)

cient rhythmic vigour, and on the ability of the 17 young musicians of the Kreier String Orchestra to interpret it.

The main soloists, Carr himself on trumpet and flugelhorn and Phil Todd on soprano saxophone and bass clarinet, reap the reward of the orchestra's enthusiasm. The composer plays with great vivacity on the first ("Open Country") and third movements, while Todd's bass clarinet is the highlight of the finale, "Spirit of Place", helping to alleviate a feeling that Carr's writing is beginning to run out of ideas.

The balance of a generously proportioned album consists of three pieces by Nucleus, Carr's regular sextet, featuring his own passionate, tightly muted work on the at-

mospheric "Full Fathom Five" and the excitingly elegant acoustic guitar of Mark Wood on "Old Heartland".

Wood gets an album to himself in *La Mezzola*, a set to please those whose interests encompass the more thoughtful end of jazz-rock fusion music. In his enthusiasm for diversity and love of melody, Wood probably most resembles Pat Metheny, but there is no similarity in their actual playing. Nor is there any interest in virtuosity for its own sake: you get the impression that if Wood got the sound he wanted from a coconut and a baby's rattle, he'd settle for that.

Sometimes, as in a Penguin Café Orchestra-style homage to South American music, the humour gets a little simplistic, but elsewhere, in pieces inspired by Africa, Japan and other corners of the world, there is much to enjoy. The bassist Chucho Merchan and the drummer Nic France are his rhythm team; the former King Crimson drummer Michael Giles acts as both producer and percussionist, while the trumpeter Dave DeFries, Wood's colleague in the quartet *Snowbird*, makes a guest appearance.

Richard Williams

## Reggae rhythms

ROCK

Various Artists: *Pressure Drop* (Mango MBOX 25)

An entire album is devoted to the work of Leslie Knog, who, as the copious notes in the accompanying booklet inform us, was a Jamaican record store owner-turned-producer. His commercially attuned ear did much to realize reggae's crossover potential and included here are his productions of Desmond Dekker's hits "Israelites" and "It Meek", Jimmy Cliff's "Hard Road to Travel" and the Maytals' "Pressure Drop" and "54-46 (That's My Number)".

Whole albums are also devoted to the more eccentric production style of Lee "Scratch" Perry, whose biggest success was Junior Murvin's "Police and Thieves", and to the production work of the veteran rhythm section Sly & Robbie. Their contributions tend to be neatly topped and tailed and often take that tugging cross-

rhythm into the land of over-smooth schmaltz (for example Dennis Brown's "Sitting and Watching" or Jimmy Riley's "Love and Devotion").

It seems vaguely insulting to collect all the female artists (except Millie Small) together on one side almost as an afterthought, even if it does include Sheila Hyton stanking woodenly through her lacklustre (hit) version of Sting's "The Bed's too Big Without You".

But there is no place for "reggae girls" at the thematic heart of the set: the album titled "Rasta", where that rooowndly chauvinistic faith so central to the making of reggae music is celebrated. Here the languid, heavily devotional style which Bob Marley took to worldwide success is well represented by tracks including Marley & the Wailers' "Jah Live" (a close relative of his "No Woman No Cry" hit) Aswad's "Rainbow Culture", Steel Pulse's "Prodigal Son" and Black Uhuru's "World Is Africa".

David Sinclair



Soaring style: Toots Hibbert stirs it up in performance

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THE TIMES CLASSIFIED







THE WEEK AHEAD

WEATHER EYE

Patterns of snow

The recent spate of north-westerly winds has brought surprisingly dry and mild weather...

The lowlands do not get a great deal of snow. The average number of days each year when snow is lying ranges from less than five in London...

There are two principle weather patterns that bring widespread snowfalls to the British Isles.

This brings cold northerly winds from the Arctic down across the country.

Sometimes these arctic outbursts produce more lengthy periods of snow.

The other important combination is a cold anti-cyclone to the north or east of the country and a depression pushing in from the south or west.

Most of the historic storms in southern England resulted from this meteorological combination.

THEATRE

LONDON

BETTY'S HOLIDAY CAMP: Songs and sketches by female trio, Betty Albany Emery...

THE LEGEND OF ROBIN HOOD: solo comedy performance by Peter Wear...

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE: Théâtre de Complicité in their 'Christmas nightmare'...

WHALE NATION: Roy Hutchins's solo performance of the poem by Heathcote Williams...

THE WIZARD OF OZ: Revival of an old judge's BBC production of John Kane's adaptation from the MGM musical...

OUT OF TOWN

MANCHESTER: Arms and the Merc: Paul Herzberg, Catherine Russell, Malcolm Rennie and Adrian Lukis...

MARGATE: Aladdin: Theatre re-opens with a show starring Trevor Bannister, Billy Boyle, John Bouvier and Stacey Dorring...

SOUTHAMPTON: Cinderella: Paul Nicholas, Roy Walker and Dame Hilda Brackley...

FILMS

THE WIZARD OF SPEED AND TIME (PG): Feature-length showcase for the talents of American special effects creator Mike Jittlov...

CONCERTS

CHRIST'S CHILDHOOD: Stephen Cleobury conducts the ECO, Choir of King's College, Cambridge and soloists in L'Enfance du Christ by Berlioz...

STILL MORE BERLIOZ: David Atherton conducts the BBC SO, BBC Singers and soloists in Berlioz's L'Enfance du Christ...

Playing for the aid of Armenia



World class: Mstislav Rostropovich and other musicians play in aid of the Armenian Earthquake Appeal

Tonight, after just seven days after the British Association of Concert Agents conceived the idea, a world class concert in aid of the British Red Cross Armenian Earthquake Appeal will be held at the Barbican Hall at 11pm.

by Francoise Lagrand, Barbican Centre, Silk St, London, EC2 (01-638 4141).

RADIO

VIOLETTE: Play by Ray Jenkins about Emile Zola's exile in England and his 16-year-old housekeeper, the Violette of the title.

TESS OF THE D'UBERVILLES: Kenneth Haigh begins a 20-part reading of Thomas Hardy's dark tale of a pure woman destroyed by heartless morality and cruel men.

FILMS ON TV

SWEET DREAMS (1985): First TV showing for Karl Reisz's underrated study of the country and western singer Patsy Cline...

METROPOLIS (1926): Fritz Lang's famous vision of a city of robots, in its restored tinted version with rock score by Giorgio Moroder.

THE WOMAN IN THE WINDOW (1944): Lang's fine American thriller with Edward G. Robinson as a mild professor sucked into blackmail and murder.

TELEVISION



POISON CANDY: Complex thriller from writer-director Anthony Simmons with John Hurt (above) and Karen Young as a couple terrorized by two nasty nine-year-olds in Florida.

THE RUTH HENDELL CHRISTMAS MYSTERY: George Baker as Chief Inspector Woodford investigating the case of swopped babies.

Theatre: Tony Patrick: Films: Geoff Brown; Concerts: Max Harrison; Opera: Hilary Finch; Books: David Sinclair; Jazz: Clive Davies; Dance: John Percival; Galleries: David Lee; Photography: Mike Young; Television, Radio and Films on TV: Peter Waymark

MORE BERLIOZ: The BBC SO is conducted by David Atherton in Berlioz's Le Corsaire Overture, Symphonie Fantastique and in Messiaen's Poèmes pour Eli (Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano).

SAVE CHILDREN: Graham Oppenheimer makes his London debut with a concert in aid of the Save the Children Fund, playing viola sonatas by Hindemith, Shostakovich, pieces by Enescu and Debussy.

CORELLI CHRISTMAS: Corelli's Christmas Concerto opens this concert by the Orchestra of St John's under John Lubbock.

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE: Handel's Semirame returns to Covent Garden on Thurs (7pm) with Sir Charles Mackerras conducting.

Covent Garden, London WC2 (01-240 1066)

ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA: ENO offers a typically imaginative alternative to the customary seasonal fare in David Pountney's new production of Rimsky-Korsakov's Christmas Eve.

LEVEL 42: Perennial techno-pop funk fusioners. Wed and Thurs, NEC, Birmingham (021 780 4132).

DANCE

SADLER'S WELLS ROYAL BALLET: Two more performances of The Snow Queen today. Then (Mon-Wed) Petrushka and a revised version of Bimby's Choros together with Lynn Seymour's Ballet Métrique.

ROYAL BALLET: Nicola Roberts dances Cinderella Wed afternoon and Wendy Ellis Wed evening. Covent Garden (01-240 1066).

JAZZ

SUE SHATTOCK: Arguably the most interesting vocalist to appear in recent years, backed by a brisk electric band led by Terry Disley.

COURTNEY PINE: A one-off from the young saxophonist, rounding off a relatively quiet year. La Prison, London N16 (01-923 0775) Thurs.

ROCK

THE ALARM: Recently toured with Dylan, and now share the same manager. Tonight, SECC, Glasgow (041 248 3000); tomorrow, Northgate Arena, Chester (0244 38044); Mon, Aston Villa Sports and Leisure Centre (021 328 4884); Wed, Brixton Academy, London SW9 (01-326 1022).

DURAN DURAN: Returning to promote their Big Thing album and new single 'All She Wants Is'.

OPERA

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OUTDOOR LEISURE

The treasures of the tide

Gareth Huw Davies meets the men who value what others discard

Winter storms cast up an unpredictable bounty around the coast, creating high season for the beachcomber.

They used to dash out to a boat, fiddling with their jackets when there was a fire? Muskets, balls, a skirmish? "Lead works up the river."

Ron is one of the last of the old beachcombers. He shuns the metal detector. "There is so much iron down there, and I might miss other things, such as bottles and clay pipes."

He has found a Julia Augusta denarius; he has coins from Nero, Hadrian and the Emperor Napoleon. He points out Charles II, in sharp detail; the gaunt heads of William and Mary gazing resolutely right.

At Marnis Bay near Margate I meet Fred Booth, who is interested in a different tidal treasure. Fred is up to his



Urban bounty-hunter: Ron Goode scours the Thames shore for wrack - that often has a lemony smell.

The Marine Conservation Society is asking people to concentrate harder on seaweeds and sea creatures. All use volunteers have been mapping the shore and recording the wildlife in Coastwatch, the largest survey undertaken of Britain's beaches.

Fred once found what every beachcomber yearns for, a bottle with a message. It was not a plea from a marooned sailor but an experiment by a researcher in the North-East testing longshore drift.

Further details on Coastwatch, Co-ordinator, Nature Conservancy Council, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA

Salcombe, scene of seabird solitude

WEEKEND WALK

The guide book of 1856 reported that the coastlines around Salcombe, Devon, were "almost as unknown as those of Kamtschatka".

gained. Sailors are wary - from 1700 to 1972 forty vessels were wrecked between Bolt Tail and Bolt Head.

The smart set act out Howard's Way roles around their estuarial boats and inns - but put your ear in the Shapiro National Trust car park and within a few steps the restless world is left behind.

The track is well walked to Overbeck's, a youth hostel and museum in which you can peep at the arduous life of countrymen and sailors in days long ago.

We peep at the sheltered National Trust gardens where semi-tropical plants thrive to remind us of the summer days that lie ahead.





THE TIMES COOK

# Feasting for all

Why should vegetarians and dieters miss the Christmas fun? Frances Bissell offers some meals that everybody can share

DIANA LEADBETTER



The filling

- 1 1/2 lb/680g dry weight pasta
- 1/2 lb/225g sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1/2 lb/225g shredded radicchio or Belgian endive
- 1/2 lb/225g trimmed baby leeks, cut into 1 1/2 inch lengths
- 1 oz/30g butter
- 1/2 lb/225g blue cheese or goats cheese
- 1/2 lb/225g mozzarella
- 1/2 lb/225g Fontina, Edam, Gouda or Jarlsberg

- 1 pt/570ml tomato sauce (see below)
- salt and pepper
- 2 tsp finely chopped fresh herbs as available
- 2 oz/60g freshly grated Parmesan (see below)
- 1/4 pt/430ml custard sauce (see below)

\* Cook the pasta in plenty of boiling water until just al dente. Drain it in a little olive oil to stop it sticking. Put to one side. Fry the vegetables in the butter for a few

minutes until just wilted, and put them to one side. Cut the cheese into small cubes. Use a large mixing bowl to assemble the filling. If you have used long pasta, cut it into 2 1/2 inch lengths. Stir in the vegetables, cheese and tomato sauce. Add the salt, pepper, herbs and Parmesan. Roll out the pastry carefully, and line a deep buttered cake tin with a removable base, leaving enough pastry to make a lid. Spoon the filling into the pastry case, and

heap it up to form a mound in the centre. Spread the custard over the pasta. Roll out the remaining pastry and cover the pie, using the trimmings to decorate it. Brush with an egg and milk glaze, and bake in the centre of a pre-heated oven, gas mark 5, 190°C/375°F for 40 minutes, placing it first on a baking tray. When cooked, carefully ease it out of the tin, and transfer it to a warm serving plate.

Custard sauce

- 1/4 pt/430ml milk
- 1 level tsp caster sugar
- 3 egg yolks

Heat the milk and sugar. Whisk the egg yolks in a bowl and gradually stir in the hot milk. Strain the custard back into the saucepan, and stir it over a low heat until it thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon. Pour it into a bowl, and when cooled slightly, cover the surface with clear food wrap to stop a skin forming. Refrigerate until required.

Tomato sauce

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 celery stalk, finely chopped
- 2 14oz/400g tins tomatoes
- 3 or 4 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1/4 pt/140ml red wine
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme or oregano

seasoning  
Heat the olive oil in a saucepan, and in it, fry the onion and celery until translucent. Add the tomatoes and garlic, the red wine and the herbs. Cook on a moderate heat until the vegetables are soft,

rub through a sieve and cook down further if necessary until you have 1 pint/570 mlis sauce. Season, cool and refrigerate.

Preparations for the winter pudding should be made the day before required.

Winter pudding (Serves 6)

- 1/2 lb/240g mixed dried fruit
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 cloves
- 6 cloves fresh nutmeg
- 3 in/7.5cm strip lemon peel
- 2 pt/1.15l Earl Gray or other fragrant tea
- 6 to 6 slices wholemeal bread

For decoration

- thick Greek yoghurt or double cream
- toasted hazelnuts or almonds

Cut the fruit into small pieces and remove any stones. Gently poach the fruit, spices and peel in the tea until the fruit is plumped out and tender (or soak the fruit in the tea overnight). Remove the crusts from the bread, cut each slice into two wedge-shaped pieces, dip them in the cooking juices, and line a pudding basin. Cut a circle of bread to fit as a base. Spoon the fruit into the lined basin, cut another piece to fit as a cover and pour on more cooking juices to moisten the bread thoroughly. Cover with foil and weight down with a heavy object. Cool, then refrigerate it overnight. When ready to serve, turn the pudding out on to a shallow dish. Pour on more juice if there are any dry patches, and then spread the pudding with yoghurt or pour cream over it before sprinkling toasted nuts over the surface.

Our food at Christmas time follows a very traditional pattern: a roast, stuffed bird, a haunch of venison or a cranberry jelly, followed by Christmas pudding, mince pies and Christmas cake, a 'honey-roast ham and candied sweetmeats' - what about diabetics? Or those on a gluten-free diet where wheat is forbidden? Christmas is a time to gather friends together, not to shun them from your table because they might be difficult to cater for. So why not adapt some traditional ideas?

My recipe for winter pudding has no added sugar and can be eaten by diabetics. It is also high in fibre from the dried fruit and wholemeal bread. It is not suitable for those on a gluten-free diet, but as this is a good time of year for tropical fruits, I would serve those. If you are cooking for vegetarians, it would be nice to come up with a main course that would be enjoyed by all. When I cook vegetarian dishes, I like to serve lasagna, risottos made from rice or barley, a large earthenware platter full of multi-coloured vegetables with different stuffings, or a pyramid of pancakes, some stuffed with cheese and some with vegetables and served with three or four sauces. This year my festive alternative to the Christmas roast is a magnificent dish. Based on the cooking of the Southern Mediterranean, the *timpana* of Malta, the *pastisio* of Greece and the *pasticcio* of Sicily and Naples, it is a deep pie made of sweet shortcrust pastry filled with pasta, cheese, herbs and vegetables in a rich tomato sauce. It is an unusual mixture of sweet and savoury, and a majestic centrepiece for the Christmas table. The recipe looks

long and complicated, but it is not, and the tomato sauce can be made in advance. I recommend that the custard sauce is made when required. It is cooked again in the pie at a high enough temperature to kill any bacteria.

But before all these sumptuous dishes, a light, crisp and colourful salad of fennel and pomegranate in appropriately seasonal colours.

- Fennel and pomegranate salad (Serves 6)
- about 1 1/2 lb/670g fennel
  - juice of 1/2 lemon
  - 1 large pomegranate
  - 3 tbsp olive oil
  - sea salt
  - freshly ground black pepper

Slice the fennel thinly after trimming off any damaged outer parts, and turn the pieces in lemon juice to keep them white. Cut the pomegranate in half. Extract the seeds whole from one half, and put to one side. Squeeze the other half on a lemon squeezer, and mix the juice with the olive oil and seasoning. Stir into the fennel, add the pomegranate seeds and serve.

- Rich vegetable and pasta pie (Serves 6 to 8)
- 1/2 lb/225g plain flour
  - pinch of salt
  - 2 oz/60g caster sugar
  - 1/2 lb/225g unsalted butter, cubed
  - 4 size 3 egg yolks

Mix the dry ingredients together, make a well in the centre and in it place the butter and egg yolks. Gradually mix these in with your fingertips and gather together into a ball trying not to handle it too much. Cover it. Chill for an hour.

## COLLECTING

### Tall, striking and handsome

"This is a grandfather clock in every sense," said the owner. "It belonged to my grandfather, and is really very like him - tall and handsome, but steadfastly refuses to work."

"It may only need a little adjustment to put it in beat," replied the valuer. "Even a thorough overhaul wouldn't cost much over £100, and it's worth the best part of £1,000. A moon-phase in the arch would add considerably to the value, but it's a good quality mahogany case, with an eight-day movement - not the 30-hour type that is wound, not with a key, but by pulling the chain or cord to raise the weights."



"I heard of a grandfather clock selling for £10,000 recently."

"A fine, early example can bring much more than that if it's by an important London maker such as Tompion, Knibb or one of the other great names of the 1670-1700 period, when the 'longcase' clock was still a novelty."

"Did one of that lot invent it?"

play with the cabinet-makers went to town if allowed to buy from 1670-1700 the fashion was for walnut, laburnum or ebony veneers inlaid with floral or seaweed marquetry.

"I didn't know you could inlay wood with seaweed."

"You can't. It's merely a term for delicate patterns of tendrils and arabesques. Japanning in imitation of oriental lacquer was also popular. A little glass window in the door enabled the proud owner to watch the pendulum swing to and fro. The hood was flat on top at first, with spiral columns flanking it. Later it was stepped, domed or arched, with classical columns."

"What about the dial?"

"The face was brass, mated at the centre, with a silvered chapter-ring displaying Roman numerals, and cast brass spandrels with cherub heads at the corners. Marquetry and walnut were superseded by mahogany from about 1730, and in the 1770s, brass gave way to enamelled and painted faces like yours."

"The pendulum principle was applied to clocks by a Dutchman, Huygens, in 1657, and introduced to England the following year by John Fromanteel, whose family advertised wall clocks that would go a week or a month or a year with one winding up. The snag was that the heavy weights needed to drive them made them prone to falling off the walls."

"That's what always happens when Hugo tries to hang something up."

"In the 1660s, someone hit on the idea of a 'long case' that stood on the floor. The earliest type was very narrow, because the short, 'bob' pendulum with crown-wheel escapement didn't require much space for its swing. But about 1670, a 39in pendulum with an anchor escapement was introduced, and a wider case became necessary."

"Why doesn't it have a name on the face, like some I've seen?"

"A name, often followed by that of a town, engraved on a brass face is usually the maker's, but in the early 19th century, when clock movements were mass-produced in Birmingham and London, it was often no more than the name of the retailer."

"Suppose I had a brass-faced clock with the maker's name on it, how would I know when he made it, and whether it was worth money?"

"You look him up in Watchmakers and Clockmakers of the World by G.H. Baillie. It lists 36,000 names, with dates and other information that helps establish the value."

"And if I wanted to buy an early clock, what would I have to watch out for?"

"Escapement? Makes me think of Colditz, not clocks. Frankly, the mechanical details are wasted on me. Tell me about the cases."

"Alterations and marriages. Many movements have been taken from plain cases and married to showy ones."

"Sounds like living in sin."

Peter Philp

### SALE LIST

**RAILWAY COLLECTIBLES:** Among the 500 lots on offer are pictures, posters, photos, maps and antiquated timetables from the days of steam locomotion. Also 19th-century engineers' drawings. Onslow's Auctioneers, Baden Powell House, Queen's Gate, London SW7 (01-793 0240). Tomorrow, 1pm.

**DRAWINGS & WATERCOLOURS:** Works by English and European artists, mostly 18th-century, carrying estimates from £200 to £2,000. Phillips, Blenheim House, 7 Blenheim Street, London W1 (01-629 6602). Mon, 11am.

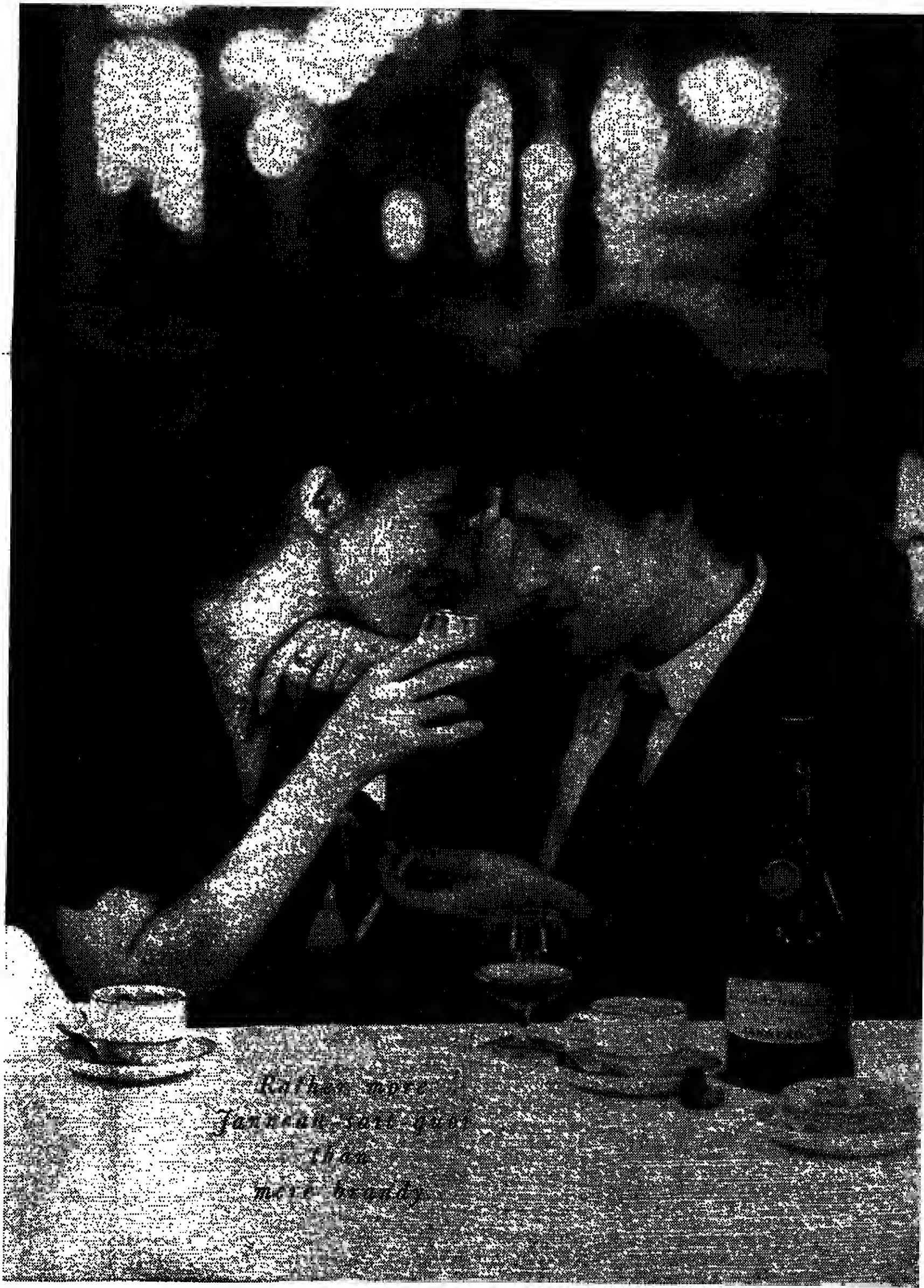
**FURNITURE:** Mainly 18th and 19th-century pieces including some good provincial French armchairs. Henry Spencer & Sons, 20 The Square, Retford, Nottinghamshire (0777

708633). Mon, 11am.

**TRAINS GALORE:** A sale of fine small-gauge model and toy railway rolling stock and accessories. A Bing clockwork trainset, circa 1908, carries an estimate of £1,500-2,500; an Ever Ready battery-operated Underground trainset, vintage 1953, £50-80. Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (01-581 7611). Mon, 2pm.

**SEASONAL SKETCHES:** The first 16 lots of Bonham's sale of watercolours and drawings are original artwork commissioned by magazines such as *Sphere*, *Byzander*, *Tatler* and *Illustrated London News*. Bonhams, Montpelier Street, London SW7 (01-584 9161). Tues, 2pm.

Jenny Gilbert



# JANNEAU

VSPD Armagnac



EATING OUT

Rich vein in the salt beef mines

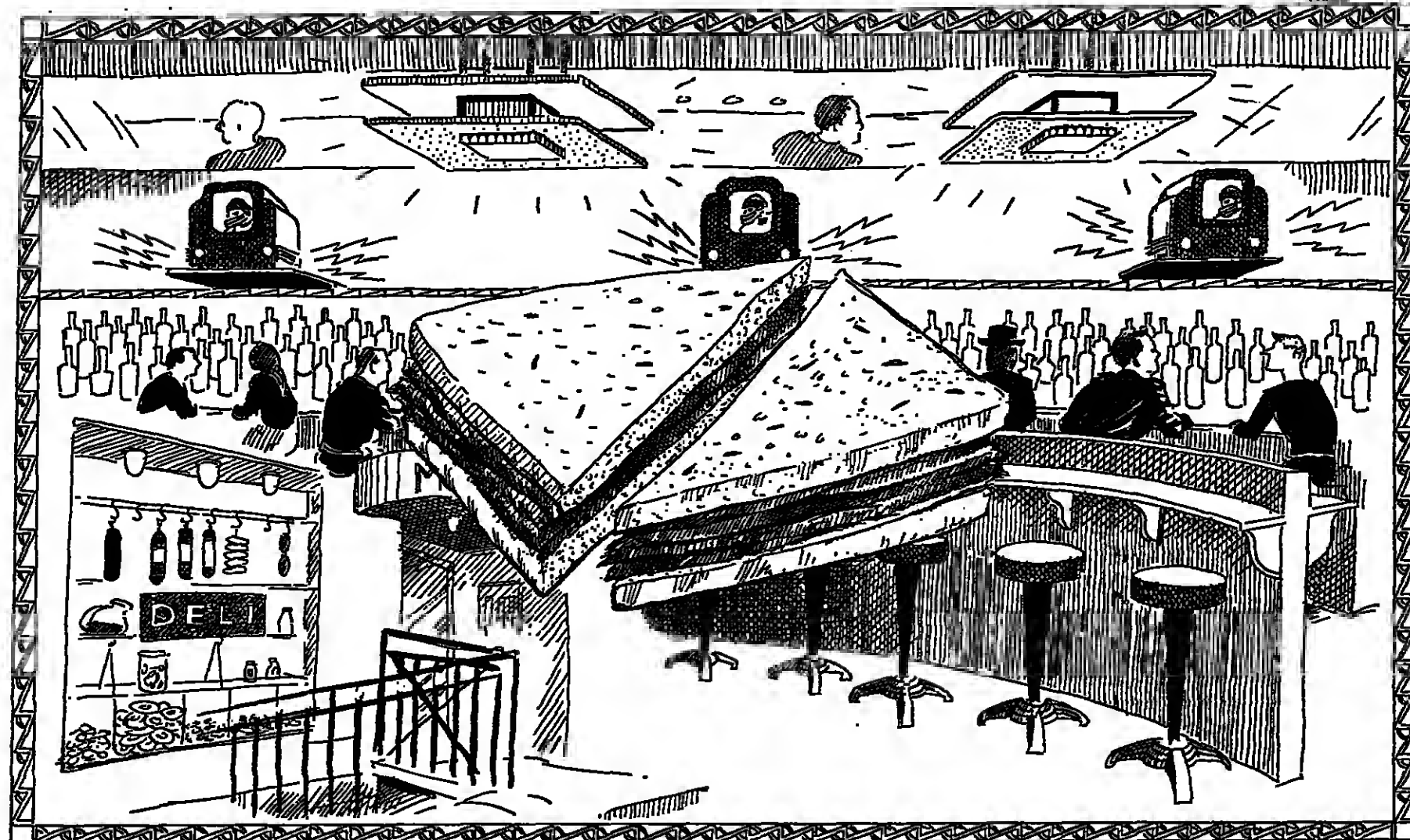
Jonathan Meades samples the fare, kosher and otherwise, at a mixed bag of delis

Mitchell and O'Brien is another Soho salt beef bar. But then, Maradona is another footballer, De Niro another actor. M & O'Brien, being a repro New York deli, calls its salt beef 'corned' beef, which may be a mistake: I can't believe that I'm alone in never having eaten this disgusting staple of school lunches since the Aberdeen typhoid outbreak of 1964.

Salt beef, however, is a different matter. The trouble with eating it in Soho is the sort of place in which it is habitually served: salt beef sandwiches, laikes and pickled cucumbers are a classic combination. But the invariable fourth ingredient, bloody-mindedness, tends to dissipate the attractiveness. It doesn't seem to matter whether or not you are Jewish - you are treated with brusque contempt. M & O'Brien import its beef, but it has not brought over a team of waiters who take pride in their essays in punter-humiliation. What it has done is to take one of the latest, august sites in Soho (formerly occupied by a rather timid off-the-peg Francais establishment), and turn it round.

St Anne's Court is an alley that runs between Dean and Water Streets, about 200 yards south of Oxford Street, and 300 yards north of Old Compton Street. The place has been designed by Fitch & Co, who were also responsible for the extravagant Braganza, the adobe-like Jamdani and the best looking wine shop in London (in Upper Berkeley Street). The style here is more or less art deco in its American guise - it is tougher and bolder than is (or was) the norm in this country. And, unlike most recent nuttings in this idiom, it is not laid on impasto; the decoration, the packaging, is not really what counts - the important thing is the way the space has been used, and this has more or less to do with architectural nous than with "style".

The bar through which one enters is large, austere and looks as though it has been around for ever. It has a workmanlike air and has more in common with the cavernous bars of Irish Kilburn than it does with "new wave" cocktail bars. The cocktails themselves are in earnest: no crudely punning names, no silvery coloured mixtures conceived to appeal to the infantile eye, no umbrella. Instead, there are proper Manhattan, proper Bronx cocktails, proper Martinis - given the choice between the Martinis here



and those at Kensington Place I'd have both and then some more. This bar, to judge from last week, is probably the best place in London to observe the Blacks (those young and youngish persons who wear no other colour and move about Soho in swart phalanxes); the Blacks talk as well as preen. I think this renders loud music redundant. I think, also, that it renders the trio of Bakelite television sets showing tennis videos redundant. The restaurant, glassed off from the bar to its east, and approached through a satisfyingly heavy revolving door, is bereft of unasked-for aural aggravation. At one end there is a deli counter for take-aways. There are green vinyl banquettes, well spaced with

metal-framed chairs that are comfortable. The menu is probably too extensive. It hedges its bets by including such items as Maryland Crabcakes and King Prawn sandwich, which clearly have no place in the deli tradition. This tradition, which derives from Ashkenazi cooking which, in turn, derives from eastern European cooking, is the mainstay of the establishment, and really needs nothing to back it up. The salt or "corned" beef is properly succulent and the chicken soup with dill dumplings is surely better than that which anyone's mother ever made - quite how many times the broth had been through muslin to achieve its limpidity is anyone's guess.

The herrings with sour cream are the works, and so is the chopped liver which does not hit the tongue with the habitual ferrous punch. Such classic salads as chicken, tuna and pickled salmon were all slightly sweet - but these dishes, and things such as gefilte (chopped) fish and pastrami sandwich, are prepared with a care that is rare in this city. The concoction called a Hot Ruben, which combines meat and cheese, is not only not kosher but not very nice. This cooking, because it is, as I say, fundamentally eastern European, is not to be accompanied by wine. There is a good selection of American beers, and with, say, four Michelob's, two will pay about £30.

On a parochial note, I should point out that the titular O'Brien is Rita, daughter-in-law of the man about whom Harold Macmillan once imperiously inquired: "Who is Conor O'Brien?" If this is what the daughters-in-law of polymaths can do when they turn their hands to restaurants, more of them should be pushed in that direction. I'm afraid that I know nothing about the father-in-law of Jimmy of Jimmy's Salt Beef Bar: we can safely assume that he was not the UN representative in Katanga, that he was not editor-in-chief of The Observer (though you never know). For certain we can say that he should be proud of his daughter's husband for running a place that puts the old-school Soho

places to shame. Edgware has other attractions, too, mostly of the 1920s and 30s - the houses in Canon's Park, a stunning Tudor-bethan pub on Station Lane, stream-lined bungalows. Jimmy's is all wood and Anaglypta and plastic - especially plastic. The cooking is faultless: salt beef in which the grain of the meat is apparent; thick laikes like ill-shaped quois which are not greasy; lemony calf's foot jelly; white cabbage stuffed with rice and chopped meat and served with a fine tomato sauce; salted cucumber and pickled cucumber. The service is as good as the food. With several lemon teas and mineral waters, the bill for two was £21. Having eaten a good meal at the

Garwick Hilton last week. I rather dumbly assumed that this chain of hotels must be doing something about its restaurants: improving them, for instance. Minsky's, at the roundabout between Lord's and Regents Park, would suggest that this is not the case. This Hilton restaurant serves kishka, which the Scottish waitress attempted to deter me from by describing it as "Jewish haggis". This was an insult, although well meant, to both kishka and haggis; it was greasy and nasty and inedible. The gefilte fish was pretty unpleasant, too, and so was a dish of oddly chalky mozzarella with sun-dried tomatoes. The salt beef was terrible - too thinly sliced, as if it were ham, of all things, and desiccated. The laikes were all right, and so was a first course of herrings with sour cream and apples. With three beers, two will pay £38.

At Uncle Ian's Deli Diner I found a partly dissolved stock cube in my "bean 'n' barley" soup. Further, the salt beef was rubbery. But the other soup, lockshen, was good and so were the krepelach and kneidlach in it (respectively: stuffed wonton-like thing and dumpling). On the walls are posted the dicta of Uncle Ian, which are not, perhaps, as funny as Uncle Ian reckons they are. But the place, which is bright with white tables and red chairs, is animated, and useful if you live within a couple of hundred yards. £10 with tea.

- MITCHELL & O'BRIEN**  
 \*\*\*  
 2 St Anne's Court, London W1 (01-434 9941)  
 £30. All major cards. Children. Wheelchair access. 8.30am-11pm. Mon to Sat.
- JIMMY'S SALT BEEF BAR**  
 \*\*\*  
 301 Hale Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (01-958 4955)  
 £21. No credit cards. 11am-9.30pm, every day except Fri.
- MINSKY'S**  
 \*\*\*  
 Hilton International Regents Park, Lodge Road, London NW8 (01-722 7722)  
 £38. All major cards. 12.30-2.30pm and 6.30-11pm, Mon to Fri and Sun. 6.30-11pm Sat.
- UNCLE IAN'S DELI DINER**  
 \*  
 1105 Finchley Road, London NW11 (01-458 3493/8178)  
 £10. Most credit cards. Unlicensed. 9am-midnight every day.

RESTAURANT GUIDE

Continued on page 38

**Khan's RESTAURANT**

13-15 WESTBOURNE GROVE, LONDON W2

Telephone: 01 727 5420

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK  
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**ZITA GREEK RESTAURANT**  
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 Tel: 01-727 5222  
 Open: Mon-Fri 12pm & 6pm-11pm, Sat 6.30pm-11pm

**THE VILLA PANDORA TRATTORIA**  
 44 HIGH STREET, HORNCHURCH, ESSEX  
 Opposite The Bush Club

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This is a changing selection of restaurants visited in recent months - managements and standards may have changed. Stars - up to a maximum of 10 - are for cooking rather than swags and chandeliers. Dishes described are included to give an indication of the cooking but may well have changed. Prices quoted are for a three-course meal with drinks for two, and are determined according to the "Wine in Flavour" principle: in the case of French places, aperitifs and a bottle of modest wine; tea in the case of oriental ones; beer or lassi in the case of Indian ones and so on. JM.

**SOUTH LONDON**  
 Harvey's 2 Bellevue Road, Wandsworth Common, London SW17 (01-727 5737)  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 Marco Piana White is a major league chef not merely in British but in European terms. His cooking is generally akin to that of the modern French masters and derives largely from French regional dishes re-interpreted with a virtually unresponsible care and dedication. His sole gras dish of that liver sandwiched between potato pancakes is amazing. His rabbit saddle with large wine sauce is a similar marvel. Sweets are sumptuous, cheeses a bit on one note. The wine list goes on improving. This is among the finest places in Britain. £30.

**Carraro's** 32 Queenstown Road, London SW8 (01-720 5986/7076)  
 \*  
 The décor of this place is bang up to the min even if it is poorly executed - trompe-l'oeil architectural fragments, that sort of thing. But the cooking, despite attempts to pass itself off as "regional", is our old friend, Soho Italian catering. Passabile risotto, £50.

**Macneil's** 43 Balfour High Road, London SW12 (01-678 5522)  
 \*\*  
 The area is "up and coming" and so this smart, efficient place is full of old shirts and loud voices. The wine bar at the front offers good Chinese bar snacks, the restaurant at the back is lit down by glimmericks that do not come off; but some of the dishes are all right: pheasant breast with a sauce pepped up with chocolate; rum and chocolate tart; lamb with a shallot sauce. £45.

**The Graton** 45 Old Town, London SW4 (01-627 8221)  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 Lovingly restored late 17th-century house converted into a rather preposterously formal French restaurant. However, it is not pompous and much of the cooking is to be reckoned with. The sweet souffles are probably the best in town. There is not much wrong with rabbit with herb sauce and raviolis of langoustine, nor with steak sandwiching foie gras. Vegetables are less well prepared and the wine list is too Francophile. £50.

**Wesdon don Felipe** 53 The Cut, London SE1 (01-928 3237)  
 \*  
 Pleasant table bar near Waterloo frequented by Marbella hands. Most dishes are better than fish ones. Decent Plojot and Manchego cheeses. £25.

**DIRECTORY**  
 \* Fine view of the Thames and Somerset House, the old Shell Building, and Whitehall Court: it would be a fine place to dine if you could bring your own food. The cooking provided is second rate in-right stuff. £25-£30.  
 COUSCOUS  
 Laurent 428 Finchley Road, London NW2 (01-734 3603)  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 Far and away the best of the few London restaurants that do couscous. The grain is served with various combinations of grilled lamb and merguez sausages and with first class broth. To start with, the Tunisian brick a l'ouf is delicious. Cheap and potent Moroccan wins. £28.  
 Marrakesh 295 Edgware Road, London W2 (01-723 9853)  
 \*\*\*  
 Though the couscous is indifferent, this bizarrely decorated Moroccan restaurant serves some interesting dishes such as a chili-dominated soup called harira, a lamb stew called tajine, and a concoction of cold fish smothered with tomato and chili paste. £35.  
 La Reash Couscous House 23-24 Greek Street, London W1 (01-439 1063)  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 Not really a couscous house at all but a Lebanese restaurant posing as an Algerian one. The meat is perfectly all right, the couscous is uninspired. £40.

**THAI**  
 Cholburi 25 Winchester Road, London NW3 (01-722 9066)  
 \*\*\*  
 Rudimentary Thai café which serves some outstanding items: chicken curry with kaifir lime leaf; a cold beef dish flavoured with hot and sour sauce; wide noodles with soy; jelly of fruit and coconut milk. They also do take aways. £27.  
 The Blue Elephant 4 Fulham Broadway, London SW6 (01-385 6595)  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 Marvellous grilled scallops, fishcakes and sally. Good lamb with ginger and garlic, and beef with chili and baby aubergines. The place is jungle-thick with plants and the service is by boys in marial uniform. Expensive wines. £30.

**WINE MERCHANT OF THE YEAR 1989**  
**Red Wine of the Year 1989**  
**White Wine of the Year 1989**  
**Good Wine Guide**

**WE FEEL A CHAMPAGNE OFFER COMING ON.**

Right now we at Oddbins are in a very, very good mood. It's not every day you're named as Wine Merchant of the Year for the second year running. In fact, no-one's ever managed it before. But when the awards for National Chain of the Year, Red Wine of the Year and White Wine of the Year also drop into your lap, it really is an occasion worth celebrating. So between now and January 2nd you'll find three of the fifty-plus Champagnes on our famous list even more tempting than usual. If you buy six bottles of Heidsieck Dry Monopole, Mumm Cordon Rouge or Louis Roederer Non-Vintage Champagnes, we'll give you a seventh bottle of the same one absolutely free. And in the immortal words of Noddy Holder, "Merry Christmas everybody!"

**Oddbins**  
 1988 & 1989 WINE MERCHANT OF THE YEAR.

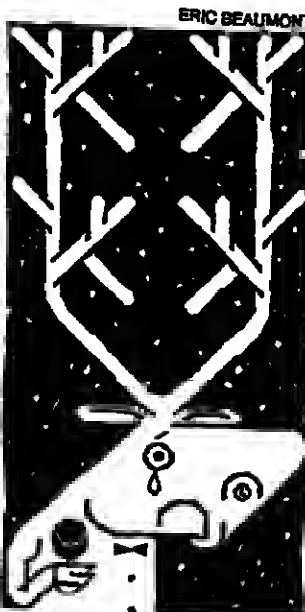




DRINK

# Robust, red and nice with spice

**1983 Beaus, Safeway, £6.95**  
This wine, with its robust, plummy-spicy fruit and delicious tobacco-like palate, can only truly cope with the milder versions of venison and pheasant.



**PARTY BARGAINS**

**Sainsbury's Amadeo, Sainsbury's, £2.15**  
Good red party bottles are easier to find than whites. If your contribution is this plummy Portuguese cinnamon-spiced mouthful, all will be well. Great for mulled wine, too.

**1987 Cante Cigale Grenache Rose, Vin de Pays de l'Herault, Waitrose, £2.35**  
Not red, but a pretty, dry rose and, as such, a deeply appealing party bottle. Light, fresh and fruity, with a crushed-strawberry scent and strawberry taste.

**Tesco Claret, Tesco, £1.95**  
It has been some time since own-label claret was either good enough, or cheap enough, to be recommended as a party wine; this 75cl bottle, from Bordeaux negociant Yvon Mau, delivers an attractive, fresh, grassy Cabernet Franc mouthful for a rock-bottom price.

**WITH VENISON AND PHEASANT**

**1988 Wynna Coonawarra Estate Shiraz, Treshers, £4.00**  
Fuller-flavoured game, especially well-hung venison or pheasant, needs the gutsiest red you can find. This luscious, spicy, eucalyptus-like Shiraz is as delicious as it is robust.

**1984 Hermitage, Gerard Chave, Oddbins, £14.99; Yapp Brothers, The Old Brewery, Mers, Wiltshire, £14**  
Big, bold and extremely attractive with it, this classy, spicy-peppery red is a textbook example of the Syrah grape at its finest, and comes from the finest Hermitage producer, too.

**TURKEY**

**1982 Heltz Martha's Vineyard, Les Amis du Vin, 51 Chiltern Street, London W1; The Winery, 4 Clifton Road, London W9, £26.16**  
Fine claret or burgundy is wiped out by the combined assault of turkey's rich, fatty SAUCES, gravies and stuffings. Joe Heltz's rich, strong, marly-blackcurrant wine will cope with ease.

**1982 Wynna Coonawarra Estate Cabernet Sauvignon, Majestic, £8.99**  
Although California Cabernet is the best bet, any New World Cabernet with bags of flavour and fruit should be able to cope. This eucalyptus-and-truffle-flavoured Cabernet will provide a memorable glass.

**1985 Santa Rita Cabernet Sauvignon, Oddbins, £2.99**  
Not all Chilean Cabernet is as great as the plaudits infer, but this distinguished, cedary-scented wine certainly is.

**Jane MacQuitty makes merry with ideas for rich, ruby-coloured bottles to complement the meats**

**BEEF**

**1987 Margaux, Safeway, £8.50**  
"Produced and bottled at Chateau Palmer" is the key to this classic claret. Despite its youthful vintage, this grassy, cassis-scented wine has a glorious, velvety palate which is perfect with rosy-pink beef.

**1978 Chateau Talbot, Saint-Julien, Majestic, £18.95**  
Mature, fourth growth claret, whose full red colour and rich, cedary scent and taste will have discerning drinkers crying out for more.

**1985 St Julien, Marks & Spencer, £7.50**  
As much of a bargain buy for Christmas claret drinkers as Safeway's Margaux, this '85

from Looville Barton, with its rich, warm, cedary fruit, will shine if you bring it up to room temperature long before serving, and decant the bottle half an hour before pouring it out.

**SPICED HAM**

**1980 Chateau Musar, Labson, Waitrose, £4.75; Barnes Wine Shop, £5.25**  
Spiced meats need punchy wines to complement and cope with them. This impressive, smoky wine, with its sweet, saffron fruit will go down well with spicy fare, including a cold, Boxing Day collation.

**1984 Domaine Surbezy Carlier, Corbières, Artur Rackhams, £3.50**

**Madame Surbezy Carlier's** rich, ripe, peppery mouthful simply bursts with fruit and flavour and would set off any spiced meat with ease and elegance.

**1986 Ser Giove, Rocca delle Macie, Barnes Wine Shop, £3.95**  
A good Italian red such as this firm, smoky, robust wine, aged in new oak barrels, would make a perfect partner to spiced meats.

**GOOSE, DUCK**

**1985 Quinta do Cotto, Grande Espolha, Oddbins, £5.99; Bibendum, 113, Regents Park Road, London NW1, £7.99**  
Lots of families are bored with turkey and choose a bird with more flavour. Goose, with a fruity stuffing, would be delicious with this spicy, cinnamon and violet scented wine that has the acidity to cut through the goose's fat.

**1983 Valney, Labouré-Rol, Safeway, £2.95**  
Duck would accompany this



An immense, purple-black Sangiove from Tuscany, with a rose scent and velvety palate which should cut through most stuffings and sauces with ease.

**PORTS**

**1978 Warr's Quinta de Cavadinha, Majestic, £13.95;**

**Oddbins, £13.99; Waitrose, £14**  
I have been waiting all year to write about this: black as night and boasting an intoxicating perfume in flavour. **1985 Sangiove del Borgo, Vinattieri, Bibendum, £4.46**

**Finest Vintage Character, Churchill Graham, Barnes Wine Shop, 51 Barnes High Street, London SW13, £5.95 (70cl); Morris & Verdin, 28 Charlton Street, London SW1, £7.40 (75cl)**  
For once, a reasonably priced port whose contents live up to the label. This ripe, full, peppery port would be good with Stilton, even better on its own.

**1976 Graham's Malvedos, Oddbins, £14.49**  
One of the finer Malvedos vintages. This seductive port has a wonderful scent and tastes of roses.

**DIGESTIFS**

**Sainsbury's Calvados, Sainsbury's, £9.95**  
A fresh scent and light, fiery taste.

**Domaine de Pléchat, 10 Year Old, Oddbins, £12.99**  
Single estate armagnac, with a spicy, flowery bouquet and an elegant, nutty flavour. Good value for money.

**Springbank, 21 Year Old Malt Whisky, Oddbins, £29.50**  
This rare Campbeltown malt is due for a dramatic price rise soon; velvety, mild as milk, and blessed with a luscious nutty taste.

FOOD

## Going crackers about bangers

At Christmas it is the little things that count: not the long-awaited and pre-arranged present, but the surprise stocking-filler; not the obligatory party but the unexpected telephone call or Christmas card; not the interminable turkey but the chipolatas. Christmas is made by its trimmings.

Of these, sausages are among the best-loved. People are not completely rational about sausages. The world's oldest pre-packed and processed food is simply too good a joke. George Robey reckoned: "You've only got to say 'sausages' and people laugh. It's the funniest word in the English language."

Like most things, sausages are first heard of in China. The oldest known sausages in the world are depicted in wall paintings of the Later Han. Homer gave them the nod with the first written reference, in *The Odyssey*, in the 9th century BC. But there is little doubt that sausages really originated in prehistoric times, when hunters realized that animals' stomachs made a durable receptacle into which they could pack the savoury remains of their prey.

Every nation, every region, and almost every family pays homage to some special kind of sausage that it regards as the sausage of its dreams. So it is with the British banger — a sausage no other European would deem worthy of the name. It is as British as bitter, afternoon tea and breakfast. It

**As British as bitter, the sausage reigns supreme as a national favourite; but which of the many varieties is the 'real' thing — and what is it made of?**

goes, after all, with all three. When Britain's greatest man of letters, Graham Greene, returns (all too rarely) to our shores, what does he crave? A pint of beer and a sausage. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury has confessed his devotion to the burnt, knobbly bits at the end. And of course there are sausage makers by appointment to the Queen, although they do not include Norman Parkinson, the photographer, yet.

Parkinson started making sausages as a sideline, to satisfy his own appetite, on the island of Tobago more than a quarter of a century ago. His celebrity, and his eccentric way of occasionally smuggling them around the world for the likes of Elizabeth Taylor (a pound in each shoe in his luggage), gained his sausages a certain *renom*. He called them The Famous Parkinson Banger, and oow Parkinson, the brand name, and the sausages have been adopted by as high-powered an entrepreneurial band of yuppies and Big Bangers as ooc could hope to assemble.

Two top men from Saatchi and Saatchi, the founder of the Broad Street PR group and the stockbroker who was co-

founder of WPP, have conspired to give the Parkinson sausages a higher profile. Instead of flying concealed in the luggage hold, they are now eaten on Concorde. They are also stocked in Fortnum & Mason, named on the menu in smart London restaurants and clubs, and at the end of January will be launched in major supermarkets in central London. The Parkinson has aspirations on a nation-wide scale.

Parkinson's original recipe has, I know, been "adapted slightly". That, I am told, was to adjust the "balance" which

**'The Archbishop of Canterbury has confessed his devotion to the burnt, knobbly bits at the end'**

accommodates an unusually high proportion of meat (80 per cent), and not to introduce the phosphate emulsifier E450(a) (a way of adding succulence in the shape of water), preservative E221 (sodium sulphite), and flavour enhancer 621 (monosodium glutamate) which I spy in the ingredients list, along with "natural flavourings (honey, lemon)".

The Parkinson, a mild-flavoured and medium-fine textured sausage, will not be everyone's ideal. Some people are allergic to monosodium glutamate, so they will be put off straight away. But then how could any one sausage gain universal acceptance as the Great British Sausage, universal symbol of excellence?

There are, at a rough count,

18,000 sausage-making butchers at work in Britain today. The number is sadly diminishing, but it is still a safe bet that there are at least as many different recipes being followed. Some butchers make as many as 15 different types. We eat six billion sausages a year. A survey reported that nearly two thirds of the population have an evening meal with sausages once a week or more.

There are still regional differences in our preferences. Scotland has a strong bias towards beef: 83 per cent of sales north of the border are beef, while in the West Midlands the proportion is virtually reversed in favour of pork. The Midlands is also the stronghold for tomato-flavoured sausages, but everywhere there is a tendency to try novelties such as fillings made with pork and apple, chilli, or lamb and mint.

They are likely to prove more transient than some of the regional specialities which are still to be found (in name at least): the ubiquitous Cumberland, whose distinctive characteristic is not its flavouring, but the mere fact that it is not twisted into links but sold and cooked in one long length; the Cambridge sausage, allegedly distinctive in using scalded rice as its bulking agent; Wiltshire, particularly porky; or Gloucester, flavoured with sage and traditionally (but seldom these days) made from Gloucester Old Spot pigs.

Leaders in *The Times* in the 1930s used, regularly and reverentially, to refer to sausages as "savory bags of mystery". The leader-writer plainly had a soft spot for them. But everyone knows by now that a pork sausage need only be 65 per cent meat, and that half that can be fat. Beef, beef and pork, or other meat sausages need only be half

meat, and again that means possibly a quarter fat. Nor will I surprise anyone by telling them that the meat may be mechanically recovered meat (MRM), stripped from the bone in what some consider an excessively "waste-not, want-not" attitude to protein.

It is not true, though, that every part of the pig but the squeak is used in making sausages. In fact the back goes as bacon, the legs are prepared as joints, meat from the head is used in pork loaf, blood goes into black pudding, liver to pâté, booes for pork jelly, surplus fat is used for lard for pie-crusts or soap-making, and bristles go into brushes. It is the tasty, inaccessible and sometimes unmentionable bits that are left after that which go into most commercial sausages. Best, the Thirties leader writer used to say, not to inquire too closely.

Yet I am assured that it is not true, as has been claimed in our virulently abusive food Press, that sausages may contain ground-up bone, eyeballs, testicles or udders. "Such items," says the British Sausage Bureau ruefully, "are not legally allowed to be used." I'm not sure I understand why, but I suspect it has something to do with national prudence and timidity. No wonder our sausages are still rather too inclined to honour Piging Brand.

Robin Young



Strings which satisfy: six billion sausages are consumed each year by the British

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OUTINGS

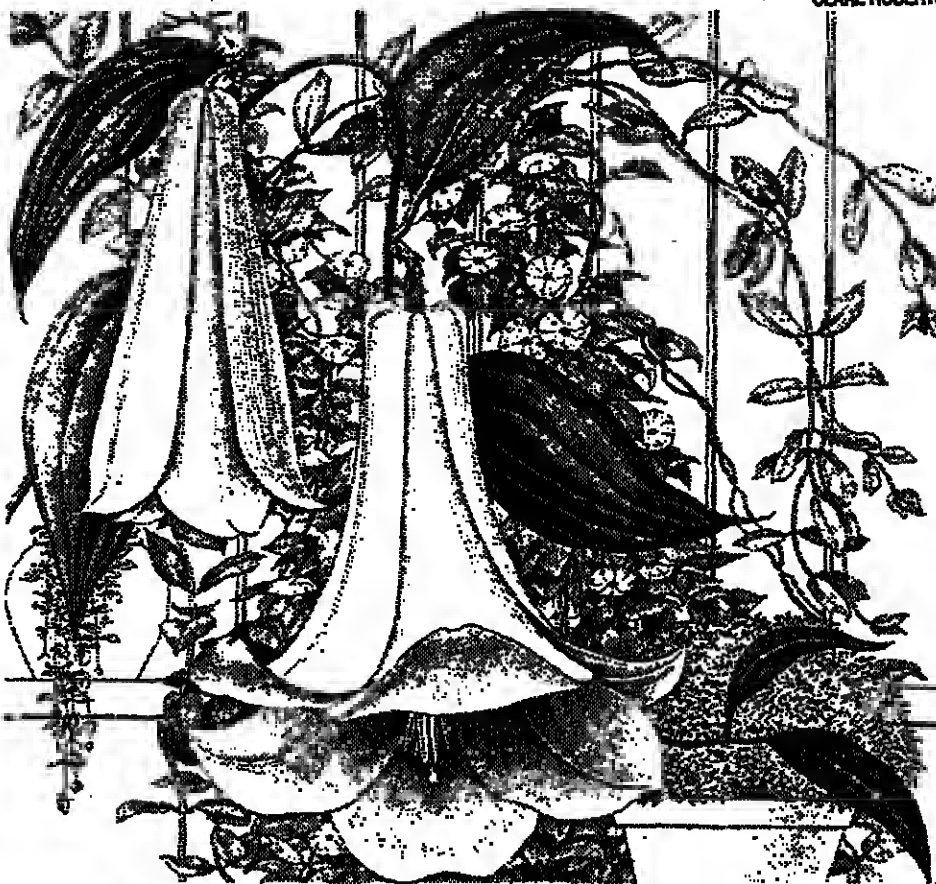
Festive fun time

SANTA SPECIALS: Rides on steam-heated trains with Father Christmas, gifts for children and - usually - seasonal refreshments for adults. Check times, ticket prices, with individual stations. Booking advised.

GARDENING

For a touch of glass

Choosing the best plants for your greenhouse



Growing under glass: Lapageria rosea (foreground), morning glory, hoya and Tacca fruticosa

The sales of conservatories are increasing rapidly, according to a gardening survey by Mintel. With a glasshouse revolution in progress, which seems to be comparable to that of the 19th century, there are hosts of salesmen waiting to sell anything from a modest lean-to to a splendid, arched Victorian edifice, but there is no specialist force to advise on what to plant in a garden under glass.

Most of us want a conservatory which is pleasant for both plants and people. New owners are terrified by warnings of the whitefly pestilence, the scourge of red spider mite and death by drought, so I have been looking for a strategy for someone with a busy life who wants to enjoy glasshouse gardening rather than chemical warfare.

Give wall plants built-in beds (with a soil-warming cable) which avoids the need to dash about watering them in the summer or heating the whole conservatory through winter nights. Free-standing plants should have extra-large pots.

50°F/10°C and should be mist-sprayed and watered freely during the growing season, which lasts approximately from April to October, and sparingly during the winter. If you come across one you will probably be unable to resist it, but it calls for careful treatment.

There is disagreement again on bougainvillea: Menzel, who grows 18 kinds, found it "fairly clean except for some mealy bug". Accurate watering is the key to success: when over-watered the plant looks parched and extra water then hastens its demise.

BRIDGE

A fine ruff

The British Open team were naturally hoping to build on their achievement in Jamaica by going one better in the recent World Olympiad in Venice. After a roller-coaster display in the round robin where, uncharacteristically, they failed to beat any of the strongest teams, they eventually finished third in their section, which was enough to qualify for the quarter finals.

CHESS

Wild ways on the board

Two further chess classics, which I would have no hesitation in recommending as Christmas gifts for the chess student, are My System and Chess Praxis, both from the pen of that great writer and player, Aron Nimzowitsch.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 1748

Prizes of the Collins Concise Dictionary will be given for the first two correct solutions opened on Thursday, December 22. Entries should be addressed to The Times Concise Crossword Competition, 1 Pennington Street, London, E1 9XN. The winners and solution will be announced on Saturday, December 24.

RESTAURANT GUIDE

Continued from page 36. The Raj Brasserie Mogul Cuisine. Fully air conditioned, cocktail lounge, disco area private conference room. Xmas offer! Free bottle of house wine between 4 during Xmas month. Book now! Sunday buffet @ 4.95, eat as much as you like! Easy parking, ring 01-388 3963.

WEEKEND TIPS

Make sure climbing plants are properly secured against winter winds. Plant fruit trees and bushes when weather is mild and soil workable. Continue tidying the garden as the leaves of herbaceous perennials die back: root cuttings taken now should be over-wintered in a cold frame.

WINNING MOVE

In the diagram, White, to move, has a quick win. What is White's winning move? Solution to yesterday's position: Black wins with 1 f1-g1.

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TRAVEL

# Santa Claus or bust

Rival claims are made for Santa's homeland. Hilary Finch put on her moonboots and combed the frozen north to track him down



The *echi* Santa: by more or less common consent Father Christmas lives in Finland, where he tends his four reindeer and answers 350,000 letters a year

TRAVEL NOTES



● Those wishing to arrive before the great thaw should book now for Christmas 1989. Accommodation at Inari with Into and Maarit Paadar at Inari, Porofarmi, Kaksamajärvi, 99670 Inari, Finland; or, for sybarites, at the cosy Hotel Inari Kuitahovi, 99870 Inari. In Rovaniemi from £35 a night at the Arctic Hotel Polar, Väitakatu 23, 96200 Rovaniemi. Day trips to Santa Claus Land are available on Concorde from £1,195 — Goodwood Travel, St James House, Castle Street, Canterbury, Kent (0227 763336) — or by scheduled Dan-Air flight from £237 with Cosmos Travel.

● Three or six-day packages (Santa's village, reindeer farm, snow-sports, etc) are offered from £615 from: Finlandia Travel, 130 Jermyn Street, London SW1 (01-830 5961) and Scanscape Holidays, 197/199 City Road, London EC1 (01-251 2500). All further information from Finnish Tourist Board, 66 Haymarket, London SW1 (01-839 4048).

Supper time: shiny noses and reindeer stew at 30° below

The ordeals by fire and water of Pamina and Tamino in *The Magic Flute* had nothing on this. Absolutely nothing. One night I found myself enveloped in reindeer skins lying on a pile of birch twigs on the forest floor. It was 70° north and 29°C below. The snow floated down, the sparks from the log fire flew up: the choice was to be burned or turned to ice. The next night it was a water-bed in a hotel room heated to 25°C above, and every window locked fast. All this is the cause of establishing once and for all the true dwelling-place of Santa Claus.

I had started in the height of the Arctic summer in Greenland: it was as near as I could get to the North Pole. I hiked across mosquito-infested tundra and found an Eskimo mayor at Kangerlussuaq who received thousands of dummies (the kind you suck) every year, painfully surrendered by Eskimo toddlers in exchange for the promise of Christmas presents. The Greenland Trade Department in Copenhagen forwards 30,000 letters a year. I was not convinced.

On to Iceland. I had been told that here there was a team of 14 Santas who take it in turns to come down from the mountains in December and distribute presents in the centre of Reykjavik. In Sweden, Jul-tomt, once just a Christmas leprechaun who lived under the floorboards and looked after the livestock, now rules a holiday centre halfway up the Gesunda mountain near Mora. No upwardly mobile Santa for me...

In Norway I was almost convinced. A very nice man called Arild Kæstiansen runs the Oslo Tourist Board, answers some 65,000 letters a year, and has a reindeer called Rudolph. But then the revelation came. I read in a Finnish book that in 1927 Santa had finally settled on Korvaunturi Fell, poised on the Soviet border, high enough to oversee north and south, east and west. More snow, more hours of darkness, far more Christmas trees. I set off.

The nearest airport was Ivalo. I arrived at 4pm; it was dark as midnight, minus 21°C, and the sigos were in Finnish and Lapp. Even the aeroplane had a ruddy-faced old man with a red hat painted on the side. It looked promising. I drove along the long, sparkling Arctic Road to Inari, where I would stay the night. Fields, rivers, lakes were indistinguishable one from the other; their brilliant moonlit whiteness made headlights barely necessary; pine and birch forest covered every mound and hill with a dense white fur.

At Inari I changed to reindeer sledge for the last 40-minute track through the forest to my teepee at Kaksamajärvi. Into and Maarit-Anna Paadar were my hosts, with their 10-year-old son Janni and their reindeer dog Compi. They cast aside my moonboots for shoes of reindeer fur, packed with hay in a bird's nest of insulation. They piled skins of deer and bear over my totally inadequate thermal coat, filled me up with reindeer stew and a fiery colourless liquid called

koso. While Maarit boiled kettle after kettle of coffee over the fire, she quietly sang *jolka*, the sensuously melodic Sámi songs from her own region, further north by the Teno river. Into and Janni went off at lam to finish herding and separating the reindeer. At 2am the temperature had dropped low enough and the moon risen high enough for the first, snake-like appearance of the aurora borealis, pale blue and green in the northern sky.

The next morning, Into's great-uncle Matti arrived for coffee. He had panned gold and killed bears in his youth; now he helps Into with the herd. The 5,000 Sámi of Finnish Lapland are not blind to the effect that their frocks of red, yellow and green, their four-cornered hats of blue and their curly-toed fur boots have on the visitor from afar. Diverted momentarily by the cornucopia of silver brooches, exquisitely carved knives and rooud, birchwood cups at Samekki Crafts, just off the Ivalo Road, I chanced on a leaflet adorned with a full-colour photo of the Great Man himself.

His name, it appeared, was Joulupukki, and he had moved, just this month, down to the Arctic Circle and a town called Rovaniemi. To the moonlit polar dawn of softly diffused pink, purple and blue, I set my compass for the south.

It was at Rovaniemi, the capital of Lapland, that I found the Hotel Polar and the water-bed. What is more, the way to his house was clearly signposted. In 10 minutes after breakfast I was there. Joulupukki was busy at his word-processor answering 350,000 letters from 117 countries.

He had a woolly bed to rest on during the day, 51 red-clad elves (some of them with American accents) in help him answer 60,000 phone calls on 13 lines, and four reindeer called Vikke, Tupu, Hupu and Lupu, who were gorging themselves silly on pre-packed sphagnum moss.

At the Santa Claus Village the activity is frenetic stamping, franking, posting and wrapping, the din of cash registers and sleigh bells. It is indicative of a race against time in both the short and long term. In 1984 the Finnish government decided on "the use of Santa Claus in marketing Lapland... as a province of peace and goodwill"; and in four years' time the hotels were full.

But suddenly there seemed to be less snow. Even as plans go ahead for the village to expand — more craft workshops, more kitchens and a massive underground development — the greenhouse effect is being felt.

This will not stop the Finns. By the year 2000 accommodation in Lapland will have doubled; Santa's glass factory, his zoo at Raana, his ski-slopes at Luosto will have transformed the Lapp economy; and Finnair, "the official airline of Santa Claus", will be causing air-traffic chaos at the Arctic Circle. But perhaps another 500 years on, Joulupukki himself will be well on his way back to the Pole, in search of snow.

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# British indoor revolution gathers pace

The revolution in tennis facilities in Britain — begun this year by the Lawn Tennis Association — is receiving a positive response from the public, with increased numbers taking up the game.

Britain's steady decline, both in tournament play and international team competitions, has persuaded the LTA to invest a substantial part of the massive annual profits from Wimbledon in launching their Indoor Tennis Initiative. The Davis Cup final, the unofficial world team championship, in Gothenburg this weekend, comes as a reminder that it is 10 years since Britain contested the final: 12 days ago the nation lost ignominiously to Indonesia in the women's equivalent, the Federation Cup; there is no British man in the world's top 150; no British woman in the top 50.

The ITI scheme, which targets 50 indoor centres by 1993, is beginning to bear fruit. Four are already open and the first, opened at St Albans in May, reports an encouraging response.

Ian Peacock, the chief executive of the LTA, says: "With children of 13-15 years old, tennis has had a good image

**Tired of being regarded as a third-rate tennis nation, Britain is counting on the Indoor Tennis Initiative to produce a champion. John Goodbody reports on the positive response from the public**

despite the lack of outstanding British figures. But by the age of 24, tennis has not been one of their sports. It had failed to live up to their aspirations.

The Batchwood centre in St Albans has been a pioneer for the LTA in trying to change these attitudes. More than 16,000 people have used the centre since it opened in May; 900 have taken up a prior booking facility, which is now oversubscribed.

Usage for the four indoor courts has averaged 75 per cent — 80 per cent from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m., seven days a week. The centre has five new outdoor courts, open the same hours. These enjoyed 37 per cent usage in July, traditionally the most popular period because of the interest generated through Wimbledon, but by the end of November the usage had fallen to 12 per cent.

Phil Sandilands, the ITI's project manager, says: "It is important to have outdoor courts, because during the summer people do like playing outdoors. They become drawn into the sport and continue playing during the winter on the indoor courts."

Anyone can use the "pay-as-you-play" centres, which will provide coaches with expanding opportunities for professional teaching, raise competitive standards, bring a boom in the sport's development and could ultimately lead to a men's singles champion at Wimbledon for the first time since 1936.

Britain may have had 600 outdoor courts per one million head of population, compared to West Germany,

France and Sweden, all of whom have 350 courts for the same proportion of the population. But, as the LTA points out, many were often badly kept and, more importantly, in the winter evenings or in the rain or wind of a typical English summer, could scarcely be used.

West Germany and Sweden who are contesting the Davis Cup final — and France have benefited in the number of covered courts they possess. Britain has had only four courts per million people, West Germany had 50 courts, France 60 and Sweden 170.

So the ITI was devised, using the annual profits from Wimbledon, which were less than £1 million in 1982 but have since risen to £7.6 million. The LTA has forever hessed the agreement it made in 1934 — that its annual championships would be staged at Wimbledon, with a joint committee of the All England Club and the LTA, but that the profits of the championships should go to the governing body after the club had deducted reasonable expenses.

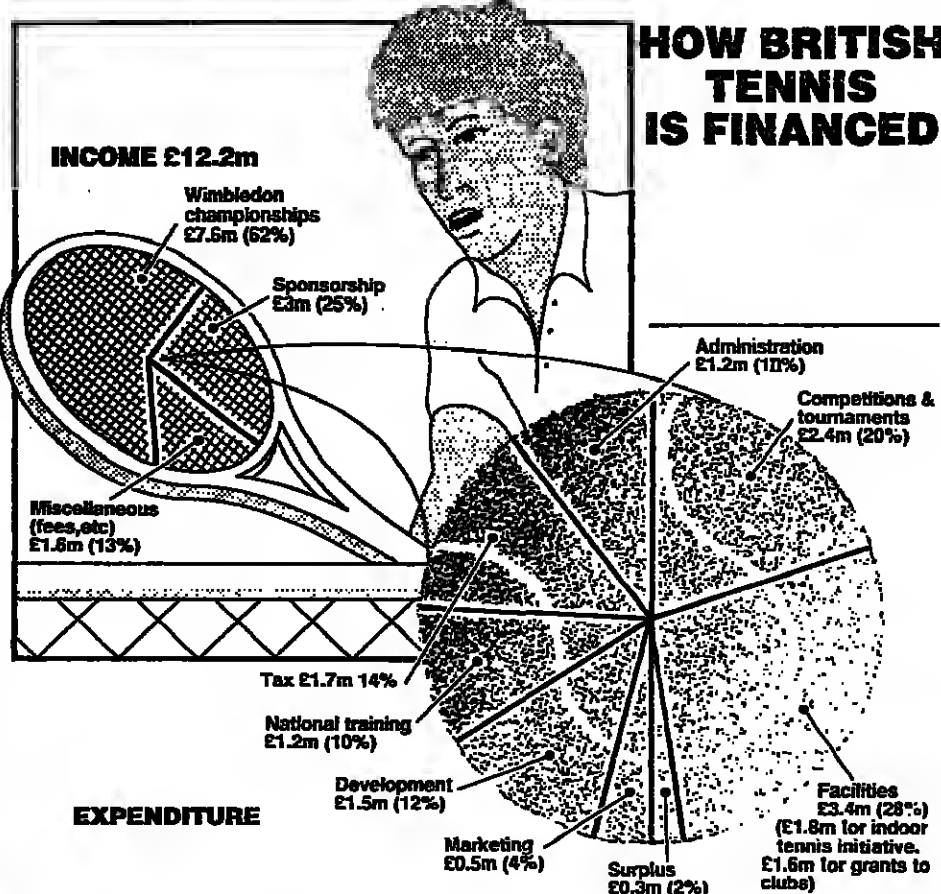
The four centres opened — the other three are at Swansea, Sunderland and Warrington — have a total of 16

indoor courts, plus outdoor areas and other facilities. Nine more projects, two of them airhalls, will open in 1989, although, even by the end of next year, Britain will still have only eight courts per million population.

The LTA, the All England Club and the Sports Council have each pledged to the ITI at least £500,000 annually for five years with individual local councils providing the rest.

The facilities are designed not as clubs but as places where members of the public can simply book and play, practise under instruction or enter open tournaments. It has been particularly important to attract new participants into the sport and keep youngsters who had taken up the game. School championships, indoor county championships and winter ratings tournaments have been staged at the new centres.

As Peacock says: "The success of countries like France and West Germany in producing outstanding players has followed about five years after a boom in the sport in those countries. If we get a similar boom of playing and interest in Britain, the talent will look after itself."



Little girls show what they are made of: Caroline Fick, Rebecca Evans and Sarah Braunwell on the frontier between confidence and hope

## The ghost of tennis ladies to come

By Rex Bellamy  
Tennis Correspondent

Bisham, just outside Marlow, supposedly has a ghost: that of Lady Elizabeth Hobly (the Hoblys were big around Bisham). She is said to linger among the surviving fragments of a fourteenth-century priory in the grounds of Bisham Abbey, the Lawn Tennis Association's national training centre.

One vaguely wondered if Lady Elizabeth (assuming she was on duty) had any spirited aides to offer yesterday on the last four contenders in a tournament sponsored by Corporate Estates Properties for girls aged 12 or less.

At that age girls look rather like an assortment of more or less vertical

pipes lacking muscular lagging. Their figures, like their tennis, tend to be straight up and down, with no inhibiting convexities. There is an engagingly gawky, slightly self-conscious air about them: and they think boys are awful. But what fun they are to watch: as refreshing as the first flowering of snowdrops.

In the spring of life we are, or were, anxious to measure up to the world's expectations — and every horizon looks attainable. Not now, not tomorrow, but one day. Moreover, in the pre-teenage years we know the real meaning of words like despise, disinterested, intrigue and terrific and are not naughty enough to use nouns as adjectives. Later, horizons recede and words are corrupted.

The lasses who have been playing at Bisham Abbey since Tuesday are still on the exciting side of the frontier between confidence and hope. They came, 24 of them, from various outposts of England, Scotland and Wales (in one case, via an overnight sleeper from the land of resurgent nationalism).

Ten emerged from regional qualifying events and the rest were invited. This past week has been special, not least because they were competing in the only 12-and-under event in the winter series run by the LTA training department. It is not an official championship but there are two of those: played in Edinburgh in May and Eastbourne in August.

The LTA is wary of making

excessive demands of the very young. Binny Blackburn, who has been running the all-girl show, is one of a team of part-time coaches who tour the regions getting to know evidently promising children. She explained yesterday: "With these young girls we keep it low-keyed and in proportion. If they win, we don't let it go to their heads. And we use these events for training, as well as competition."

Children who are hungry enough and good enough will continue to benefit from subsidized competition and coaching at regional level. Such subsidies are necessary. A tennis education is expensive for parents. The bills can haunt them. Occasionally, so does Lady Elizabeth Hobly.

## Cards cost will be £34 million

By Clive White

The cost to football of the Government's proposed membership scheme is £34 million. That is how much the Football League has discovered it will cost to install the necessary equipment at the 92 grounds — and the League wants to be sure that it works properly before embarking upon such a massive financial outlay.

The League want the Government to agree to a pilot scheme and it is possible that they could be amenable to such an idea. Colin Moynihan, the Minister for Sport, said recently: "We want to make sure that the technology is foolproof and effective before the system is introduced, but we also need a realistic deadline."

The cost of the Government's ambitious plans to eradicate hooliganism from the sport was made known this week when the management consultants, Arthur Young, who had been commissioned by the League,

produced their independent report.

"The consultants' view was that there should be a trial run on at least one ground before the money is spent to see whether the system works," Jack Dunning, the League president, said yesterday. "Whether the Government will tolerate that, we don't know. But we'll put it to them. If we put in all the equipment and people are not getting into grounds, you have wasted £34 million."

Dunning wants to see a pilot scheme at three clubs, of various sizes, attracting large, medium and small attendances. "It wouldn't involve the whole ground, but would help us find out where the gremlins are," he said.

As expected, the consultants do not believe it is possible for football to meet the Government's planned deadline of spring, 1990, simply because supplies of equipment are unlikely to be available. But the Government have warned that they do not intend to

allow the scheme's introduction to be deferred indefinitely and Dunning promised that they would not "hold up on the Government".

The League have set up a six-man sub-committee to consider the creation of the Football Membership Authority (FMA) who will orchestrate the scheme.

It will consist of Graham Kelly, the FA chief executive-designate, Gordon McKeag and Ian Stott, the chairman of Newcastle United and Oldham Athletic, respectively, Jack Crawford, the League's crowd control adviser, Trevor Phillips, the Football Association's commercial director, and Glen Kirton, an FA official.

The committee is being set up in anticipation of the Government's Football Membership Bill, which should be published in the second week of January. "When it comes out the sub-committee will be in a position to consider the implications and recommend

what to do about FMA and the necessary equipment if the bill is passed," Dunning said.

Nearly 100 companies are vying for the lucrative business of installing the equipment and some have even suggested that it could be done without any cost to football if the sport was prepared to pass on membership lists so that the information could be marketed.

A separate authority will be given power to license only those clubs and stadiums with the necessary equipment. If a club cannot afford to install it, then it will have to drop out of the League. Some may feel inclined to do just that and join an expanded and regionalised GM Vauxhall Conference.

Dunning has made strenuous efforts to ensure that the blow to football is softened. "Everyone is eager to eliminate hooliganism, but the scheme still may not achieve the Government's objective because most trouble takes place outside grounds,"

## League pledge more aid for England team

The England manager, Bobby Robson, was told by the Football League yesterday that he can have two weekends free each season to prepare his team before important international matches.

The League will not make big demands on the FA for compensation for postponed fixtures but their goodwill gesture looks likely to hit an immediate snag, for the two games Robson would want help with next season, against Sweden and Poland, fall within five weeks of each other in the autumn.

Acting secretary David Dent, admitted: "We wouldn't want to have two Saturdays out of five blank at the start of the season."

Jack Dunning, the League president, who announced the concession after a management committee meeting said: "We are offering the FA two free Saturdays. They will make their suggestions and we will do our best to meet them."

## Bruno a knockout in dress rehearsal

From Ivor Davis, Los Angeles

Frank Bruno was unveiled to the American public on Thursday and to any casual onlooker not familiar with the personalities of the heavy-weight trade he came across like a champion, while Mike Tyson came across more like the proverbial "Bum of the Month" wheeled in to give boxing another rich payday.

"If Frank handles himself in the ring half as well as he does outside," ooted a usually cynical scribe who showed up to cover the Press Conference to confirm the bout for February 25 at the Las Vegas Hilton. "Then Mike will have his work cut out to hold the Englishman."

Bruno, aged 27, certainly looked the part, at a well-muscled 6ft 3in (four inches taller than Tyson) the epitome of sartorial elegance, encased in a double-breasted pinstripe suit.

He refused to get involved in bad-mouthing Tyson, whose troubles over the past six months would be grist for a marathon television soap opera. He had flown in from London the night before but showed no sign of jet-lag. He was polite, and when journalists tried to get him involved

in a verbal brawl with the champion, he cleverly ducked, weaved and emerged with not a hair out of place and without taking a single punch.

Tyson, on the other hand, looked as though he had been up all night and had slept in his oyster-coloured suit. He looked chubby and out of shape. He was, he confessed, 20lbs overweight at 240lbs, the heaviest he has ever been seen in public.

Bruno refused to be lured into wild predictions and staunchly countered questions like, "Do you have any hope of winning?" with, "I wouldn't be here if I didn't have a chance...don't you think that's a crazy, unfair question?" In another corner of the room Tyson continued to wrestle with the personal demons that continue to haunt him outside the ring.

The latest blow aimed at the champion came in Garden City, New Jersey, when a Long Island woman, Lori Davis, charged that Tyson had sexually molested her in a Manhattan disco.

For that brief encounter she wants \$1 million (about £550,000) for "trauma shock and mental anguish", which is

about the same as Tyson's challengers have received for taking grievous punishment in the ring.

Divorce proceedings with the actress, Robin Givens, dominated most of the past few months as Tyson and his estranged wife went public with their bitter personal angst, including charges that her famous husband was a disturbed man who ought to be taking medication to control his manic depressive nature.

On the boxing front there have also been public squabbles with his manager, Bill Cayton. Tyson recently fired his long-standing trainer, Kevin Rooney.

Bruno has tried to distance himself from Tyson's problems. "Deep down somewhere, all of this is going to affect him along the line," he said. "We're all human. Tyson cries and bleeds. He's human. I'm just grateful that he's here and he's confirming that we have a date on February 25th. I won't talk about his private life because that's private, but I pray he'll get madder and more frustrated and maybe lose control."

Simon Barnes's sporting diary, page 10

The perfect introduction to geography

THE TIMES

# ATLAS OF THE WORLD

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To a Liverpool supporter, Anfield is both the holy of holies and a home from home. Ian Ross analyses its peculiar magic

# Inside the shrine

A high percentage of teams arriving at Anfield are often said to have accepted defeat long before they pull on their boots. This perennial acceptance of a supporting role is perhaps understandable, bearing in mind Liverpool's remarkable achievements over the past 20 years.

But it continues to amuse the club's employees, who regard Anfield as a welcoming, homely sort of place, one which belies the media's image of it as "intimidating" or "impregnable".

Footballing novices keen to impress would be forgiven for believing that they are entering not so much a centre of sporting excellence as a venerable institution of almost religious proportions. The ground has been likened to a shrine where those who gather do so to pay homage rather than merely to support, and although such a comparison could be construed as blasphemous in a region steeped



in religious history, it is perhaps apt.

Although the peculiarly low-key atmosphere of the club is explained by Kenny Dalglish, the team manager, who he astutely describes it as "a community within a community", Anfield, like the Goodison Park home of its neighbours Everton, is an oasis in a desert to many of those who seek solace in the actions of others. Liverpool supporters entrust their Saturday happiness to a chosen few and expect wild dreams to become vivid reality. They are rarely disappointed.

The ground's recently refurb-

ished interior may not be paved in gold, as the young are informed at their grandfathers' knees, but around every corner is a timely reminder: were it required, of the enormous success the club has enjoyed since reclaiming its first division place at the end of the 1961-62 season. An illustrious past is laid alongside a comparable present in the form of hundreds of pieces of memorabilia.

It is perhaps no accident that the casual onlooker, as he strolls through the club's corridors of power, finds it difficult to move more than a few feet without being confronted by a photograph of one of European football's more glittering prizes being held aloft by a beaming Liverpool captain. If even the slightest of psychological advantages can be attained by the nailing of what may seem a relatively unimportant artefact to a vacant wall-space, there will be no shortage of people willing to wield a hammer.

The compact nature of



Kenny Dalglish: "The club is always going to be far more important, far bigger, than any one individual. We are reaping the benefits of Bill Shankly's work."

Anfield is such that it is virtually impossible to seek shelter from high-profile reminders of Liverpool's pedigree. At the top of the main staircase is a roll of honour listing the achievements of the club's many international

players, past and present. The landing which it graces leads directly to the expansive trophy room, where crystal, silver and gold items reflect achievements stretching back to the 1920s.

The propaganda war contin-

ues deep in the bowels of Anfield. As a visiting team makes its way down the tunnel towards the pitch, looming above them and boasting the club's liver bird logo and the famous legend "This is Anfield" is a sign bearing the

smudged fingerprints of those more superstitious Liverpool players who believe that brief contact with the succinct message will bring them good fortune throughout the ensuing 90 minutes. The words "expect little and you will not be disappointed" could be added without even the slightest hint of arrogance.

Housed alongside the two dressing-rooms is the famous "boot room", a small storage area for footwear which has traditionally doubled as the nerve-centre for successive managerial teams. It is here, after games, that tactics are discussed, mistakes analysed, blame and praise apportioned. If there is a secret to Liverpool's success, it is probably hidden away in here along with laces and studs.

"There is no real mystery about the boot room, it is the people in it that count," Dalglish says. "We discuss many, many topics in there, not just football. It has become famous down the years but it is simply a place where the manager can meet with the

backroom staff for private discussions." Since succeeding Joe Fagan as manager 24 hours after the 1985 Heysel Stadium tragedy, Dalglish has striven to uphold the values and ethics of his predecessor. He is swift to single out the unique bond between club and supporter as one of the more salient reasons for Liverpool's success.

"This club's never lost its identity," he says. "I don't know why that should be. The people of this city can relate to the players out on the pitch. They have a tremendous mutual respect. The club is always going to be far more important, far bigger, than any one individual. This family feeling was instigated by Bill Shankly. We are reaping the benefits of his work and realizing his dreams."

"The supporters accept that anyone wearing the red shirt of Liverpool Football Club will always give 100 per cent. That is all they ask of us and all we can do to repay them for their loyalty."

A recent development is the club museum which, despite a deliberate lack of promotion, has already been visited by more than 10,000 people since it was officially opened in July.

Supporters are greeted by an audio tape of the late Bill Shankly, the club's manager between 1959 and 1974, explaining away, in his own

imitable style, a Cup Final defeat and praising those who had travelled to Wembley for the manner in which they had enhanced the reputation of Merseysiders as passionate but fair folk.

A short video picking out a few of the club's highlights preaches to the already converted as reminders of more humble beginnings nestled behind plate glass. The spoils of recent victories are also kept here in a case large enough to accommodate again the European Cup, which the club has won four times.

The almost hypnotic effect which Anfield has on those who cross its threshold is limited these days to sports lovers. In July 1984 Dr Billy Graham, the American evangelist, held eight rallies at the ground, preaching to a total audience of more than 200,000.

He was so captivated by the warmth of his welcome that he presented to the club a bible, and a plaque inscribed with the words: "Multitudes, multitudes - in the valley of decision, Joel III."

The quote is appropriate in more ways than one. Although Anfield is one of the finest sports stadiums in Britain, the expansion of the Kemlyn Road stand, scheduled for 1983 but then shelved, may yet go ahead. "Two factors will govern our decision: whether the club is to be allowed back into Europe, and the effects of any card membership scheme," Peter Robinson, Liverpool's chief executive, says.

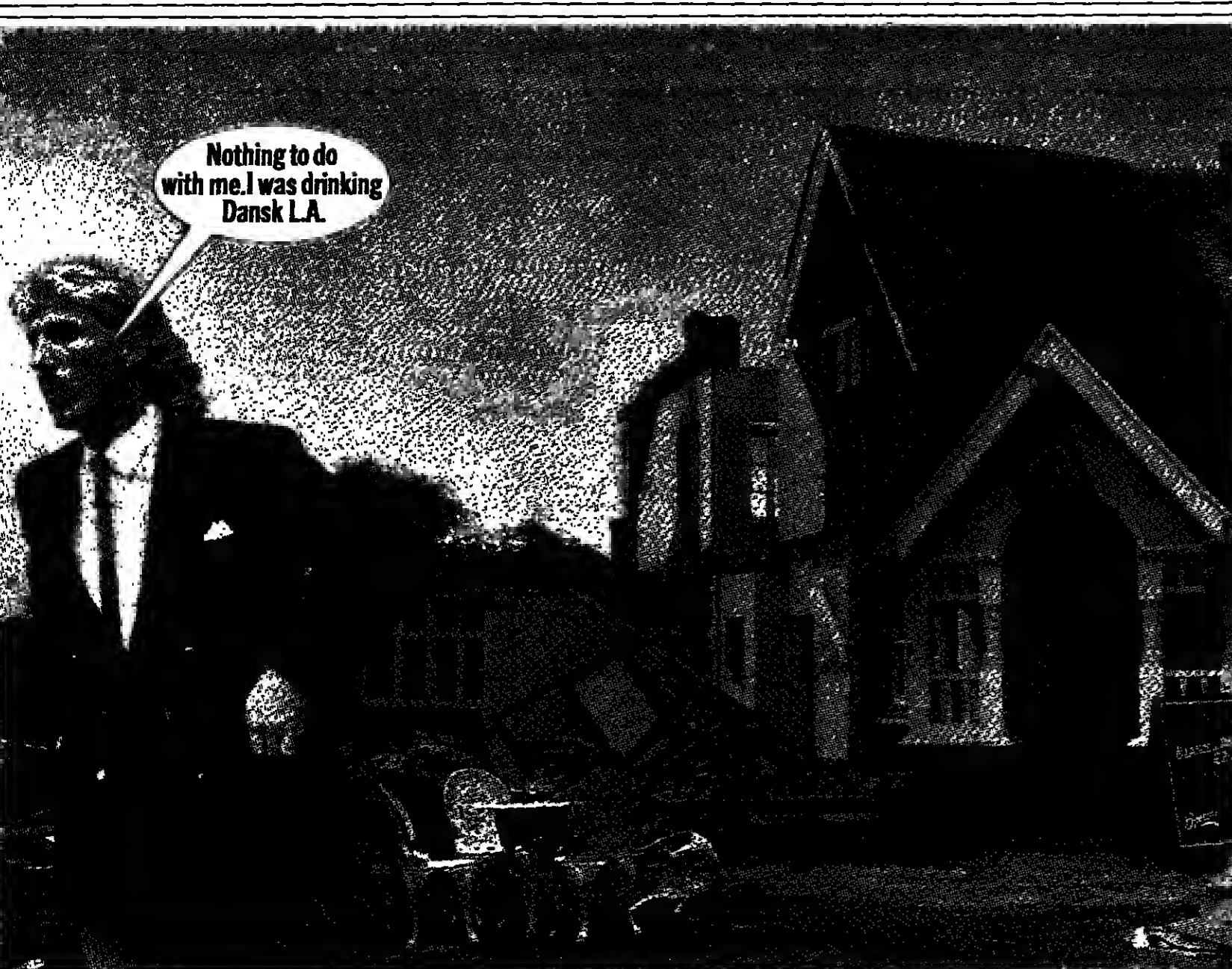
"At the moment we are selling every seat for our home games and obviously require more. Our ground capacity is 45,000, which includes 21,500 seats. The ultimate aim is to raise that capacity to 50,000, with 50 per cent of that figure taken up by seating."

After 23 years at the club, Robinson is one of the first to acknowledge the special charm and charisma that pervade Anfield. "I think it is true to say that a great many people are slightly in awe of Anfield and what it represents."

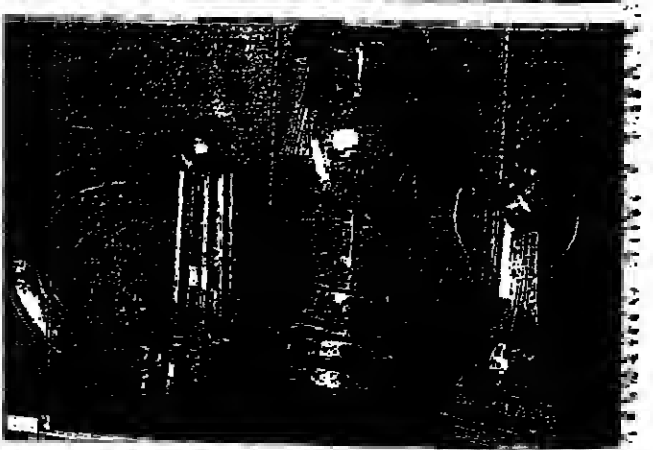
The fact that all four sides of the ground are covered has a dramatic effect in terms of acoustics. The noise generated means that the ground sounds full even when it isn't.

"People have said that this 'Anfield roar' is worth a goal start to the team. I am not so sure about that, but let's just say I don't think that it has hindered us down the years."

CHRIS COLE



REAL LAGER. NO TROUBLE.



Glittering prizes for the League Champions: top, the 1979-80 winning team; above, this year's trophy is given pride of place











SPORTS BOOK OF THE WEEK

# Sparks fly in a fraught season

Leicestershire players almost came to blows over Phillip DeFreitas and green pitches, but for Jonathan Agnew the greatest problem was disappointment at not being selected for England

**MARCH 23**

Jonathan Agnew, England cricketer? County cricketer? Or former cricketer... After everything had been said and done during the winter, I felt real excitement as I drove into Grace Road this morning. The first day of any new season provokes nervous anticipation. But I surprised myself. There had been so much talk of my retirement over the past few weeks that I had been beginning to dread the first day back.

I was unsure what the reaction of the lads would be, but I had no need to worry. I bumped into my old sparring partner, Les Taylor, in the car park,

and he reckoned that threatening to retire to take up a career with the BBC unless I was picked for England was an original way to make sure I was selected. "I'm going to threaten them with going back down the pit."

Les had been my closest friend at Leicestershire for years. Ever since he lent me his spare pair of boots at the start of my first match for the county second XI. I had left mine behind at school!

I logged my kit up to the first-team dressing-rooms, and sat down in my usual spot: crumpled up in the corner I had inherited from Ken Higgs. It always has the revolting smell of jockstraps and batting gloves waiting from the drying machine. I took a deep breath. Yes, it was good to be back!



Peter Willey was there just across the room, his kit immaculately laid out as usual. He had shocked the club by relinquishing the captaincy during the winter following last year's highly-publicised dressing-room dramas, which largely revolved around him and Phil DeFreitas. I was impressed by the criticism of DeFreitas on the New Zealand leg of England's tour. He was rebuffed for exactly the kind of attitude which had frustrated Willey last season: lack of effort, and lack of interest in the team's well-being, except when it suited him.

Willey eventually dropped him, which brought media sympathy for Duffy, and caused a split in the team. There were those who thought that Duffy should be cosseted and helped, and others

like me, who felt that he was letting us all down.

Professional cricket is hard graft. Success only comes through practice and effort on the field and DeFreitas must be made to realise that. It seemed a travesty to many of us when Duffy was selected to tour for England during the winter. I had had my best ever season, taken 101 wickets, and yet was overlooked.

It will be interesting to see how Peter Willey fits into things this season. He is a close friend, and I was shattered when he quit as captain. I know that he was deeply hurt by all the wrangling off the field last year, although he would never admit it. But at times he did little to help himself. Things are either black or white to Will, there is nothing in between. I think he will have a great season.

**MARCH 24**

Duffy turned up today - a good effort, because there was no need to do so. He looks well, and after the usual ribbing about his suntan he had a net. It coincided with my turn to bat, and immediately he ripped one into my already stiff right thigh. That amused Willey of course. It was good to see DeFreitas so keen to join us, hopefully a sign of things to come.

His problems last season came to a head with the celebrated "smit throwing, kit lobbing" incident during our match with Sussex. This is what happened.

I had been ill for several days, unable to eat anything, and the chef at the ground prepared a light fish dish especially for me. I was only out of bed in case I was needed to bat to save the match.

Then along comes Duffy and empties the contents of a salt cellar all over it. I exploded. I threw all his kit over the balcony of our dressing-room. I remember watching all the members diving for cover as boots, pads and, eventually, his bat crashed down among them.

Mainly I was angry because it was Duffy again showing such scant regard for anyone else. The problem quickly got worse because Duffy and Will had words which ended with Will threatening

to deposit Duffy over the balcony with the rest of his kit. Duffy then stormed out of the ground and went home. And we were on a run chase at the time.

Panic set in as the Press became aware of the situation. Mike Turner's soo was dispatched to Wigstoo to collect Duffy, but returned empty-handed. It was then a case of the mountain going to Muhammad as Turner drove out of the ground, watched by an increasingly bemused crowd.

An hour or so later a ripple of excitement broke out among the spectators and there was Duffy jogging in through the car park gate. Reporters surrounded him as he neared the pavilion. But they failed to notice the sleek form of Turner's Jaguar slipping into the officials' car park.

"What's up? I've just been for a run," Duffy said innocently. In fact, he went out to bat, after seriously warning me never to talk to him again, and woo us the game by smashing 26 in no time.

The eventual reason for Duffy's omission from the team was simply on grounds of performance. He was not getting wickets, and George Ferris, in the second team, was. Thus the career of the most flamboyant cricketer to break through since Ian Botham was at a crossroads. Last season ended with him threatening to leave Leicestershire.

That he has enormous talent is beyond question and it would be criminal if it went to waste. He is a completely natural cricketer, who has the ability to turn the course of a match within a few minutes with either bat or ball. He is a crowd puller too.

I hope he has learnt by his mistakes. Gower, I think, will treat him differently. He will cajole him and let him have his own way. That may work, but it may also annoy the other players in the team if he gets his own way all the time. There is no denying that 1988 is a vital year in the career of one P.A.J. DeFreitas.



DeFreitas: lack of interest

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**MAY 17**

Today I turned my back on the BBC. There is no way that I could give up cricket now. Things are going too well on the field and there is the prospect of a future at Leicestershire off the field too.

I have been offered a job as cricket development officer, organizing coaching at junior and youth level and developing Kwik Cricket in primary schools. Mike Turner also told me there could be a future for me in cricket administration, and that I could become more involved in that side of things in coming winters. I am delighted. I owe security and I can also stay in the game.

I said: "I know that you were a great bowler, Ken, but so too is Iman. He's got one wicket out there this afternoon. I think that what you have just said is ridiculous."

Nigel stepped in: "Look, this was not supposed to be a time to have a go at our bowlers. As far as I am concerned they have been magnificent."

I said: "That's fair enough Nigel, but we're sick of what's being said by the others, and now by Higgs too. Either we continue our policy of having green wickets, or we forget the whole thing. But these wickets have not done as much as people would like to think they have."

We are a team, and a bloody good one at that. If we stick together, and play hard every day, then we should get back up the table again. If we carry on like this we might as well forget it and come back again next April.

**JUNE 18**

**BRITANNIC ASSURANCE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP**  
SUSSEX 159 all out (Imran 55, DeFreitas 5-38; Agnew 3-50)  
LEICESTERSHIRE 102-4

The wicket was green again, but did not do very much. Sussex threw wickets away, and Duffy's five-wicket haul was a joke. He ran in like a 90-year-old and bowled slower than Peter Such. He claimed that he had flu. If he was not fit he should not have played.

George and I just looked at each other as he snared his victims. One of the Sussex players actually came up and apologized for getting out to Duffy! He was highly embarrassed.

It will be interesting to see what the papers say tomorrow. "Fiery DeFreitas rips out Sussex" no doubt. George said if that was the case he would sue for libel! Our batsmen battled along, with Peter Willey scoring an unbeaten 52.

At the end of play, Nigel Briars (captain in Gower's absence) called a team meeting. He said he was a different type of captain to Gower and read out a list of things he was not happy with.

Any field changes the bowler wants to make have to go through him (fair enough), and if he does not agree with them, tough (not so fair enough - the bowler knows what he is trying to do, and nine times out of 10 should have the field he wants). He then asked if there was anything that anyone else wanted to discuss.

I said I was sick of the batsmen moaning about the wickets, and blaming them for not being able to score runs. It was agreed at the start of the season that our best chance of winning the championships would be by leaving more grass on the pitch to achieve more pace. It does not matter who scores as long as everyone chips in. It is supposed to be a team game. People are thinking about their own performances too much.

There had also been too much talk recently about our seam attack not being good enough. That had mainly come from Willey, the batsman with most worries about his own form. He is happy to blame the wickets for that, but then accuses us of not winning matches on dodgy tracks.

The answer to that is simple: the wickets have not been as difficult as people would like to think. I should know. I have bowled on them all. It is easy for an out-of-form batsman to blame the wickets for his poor performances, but the four best bowlers are tired of accusations of incompetence. I have got 43 wickets. George, Duffy and Chris Lewis all 30 odd. That was when the discussion really got out of hand.

Ken Higgs, our coach, suddenly waded in. "I reckon I could have bowled them out for less than 100 on there." There was a silence while the bowlers looked at each other, and then uproar.

I said: "I know that you were a great bowler, Ken, but so too is Iman. He's got one wicket out there this afternoon. I think that what you have just said is ridiculous."

Nigel stepped in: "Look, this was not supposed to be a time to have a go at our bowlers. As far as I am concerned they have been magnificent."

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**JUNE 28**

**LEICESTERSHIRE 189 and 177**  
(Briers 51, Agnew 4 n.o., Curran 7-54)  
**GLOUCESTERSHIRE 142 and 144** (Agnew 6-39)  
Leicestershire won by 80 runs

Our second consecutive win, which lifts us to third in the table. It was also a timely haul of wickets for me. I was pleased with the way I bowled. The wicket still offered some help, but I put the ball in the right place at a reasonable pace. It has been some time since my last

decent return, and this one took me past 50 wickets for the season.

I drove back along the M5 with Phil Whitticase this afternoon. We were listening to Wimbledon on the car radio when the sports desk came on.

"There are oow real problems for the England cricket selectors. Paul Jarvis is rated extremely doubtful for Thursday's Test after breaking down this afternoon, and Nick Cook has a problem with his ankle. The selectors will make an announcement about strengthening the squad in the next hour."

"Bloody hell, Aggy, you've got to pick you this time," Phil said. I was nervous all right. I had just taken my fiftieth wicket of the season, and was bowling well.

When Dilley was doubtful at Trent Bridge they put Greg Thomas on standby. That was ridiculed by the Press, and the only bit of logic was that Thomas is an out-and-out fast bowler, like Dilley. This time it is different. The oow hour passed very slowly. My mind was racing.

At a quarter to six the sports desk came on again. "The England cricket selectors have announced that Glamorgan's Greg Thomas will be added to the squad for Thursday's Test at Old Trafford." "Well, bugger me," Phil said. That summed it up well. I thumped the steering wheel in sheer frustration. What more can I possibly do?

I will oot let it get me down though. I will show them. One hundred wickets is my target again for this year. Then we will see what excuse they come up with for not taking me on tour.



Whitticase: Aggy must be picked

**JULY 23**

**LEICESTERSHIRE 226-6**  
(Briers 118 not out)  
v ESSEX

Duffy was dropped for lack of effort during the Derbyshire match. Apparently he has pleaded guilty and he will not play again for at least a week. His excuses were that he was tired after playing for two years virtually non-stop, and that he was also disappointed after being dropped by England.

I can understand the second ooe, but he should have decided to get the bit between his teeth and show the selectors that they were wrong. Sulking only lets them question your character, and that can be held against you when a tour party is being selected.

I cannot believe that he is tired. He has had to do very little work at Leicestershire so far this season. As for the past two years, he should consider himself fortunate to have been picked to tour Australia and then New Zealand. I can understand David Gower saying that he felt jaded after 10 years of continuous cricket, but two years does not warrant that kind of sympathy.

Peter Willey is not a happy man either. He is suffering one of the leanest runs of his career, and today was run out backing up. It is the sort of freakish dismissal which always seems to get batsmen who are out of nick.

I thought I would cheer Will up a bit. I was reading a magazine which was promoting schoolboy cricket and David Essex, the pop singer, had written a few words of encouragement to the youngsters.

"Just remember that for every wide bowled or every duck scored, there is always another over to bowl or another innings to bat." I thought they were excellent words, putting the whole game into perspective very simply. I read them aloud to Willey.

"Oh yeah, it's all right for him to say that," he snapped. "If his family ever gets hungry all he has to do is stand up and sing a bloody Winter's Tale a couple of times and he's rolling in it again. What can I do when my poles keep getting blasted out?"

I could not answer him. Singing, in Will's case, certainly would oot solve the problem.

**SEPTEMBER 7**

I have oot been picked for the winter tour. I am so depressed. What more can I do to get it through to those blokes that I can bow!

At the start of the year Peter May said that they would be picking players in form. I would have thought that 93 wickets so far this summer suggests that I am in reasonable nick. Kevin Cooper at Nottingham is the only Englishman who has taken more.

The suggestion is that I can only take wickets at Grace Road? My best performances of the year have been away from home - seven for 61 at Canterbury, a six at Workop and a six at Gloucester.

Fitness suspect? Well, like last summer, I have oot missed a championship match all season. I have even played for half the year with a cracked boot in my hand.

The last time I had any cootact was when Mickey Stewart phoned me to tell me that I was very close to being picked for the first Test this summer. "Bad luck. Keep going mate," he said.

No ooe has a right to play for England, I know that. But what have I dooe wrong since that phone call? How can I be seen so close then, and nowhere near three months later? All I have done is take more wickets.

**SEPTEMBER 8**

The tour party was the main talking point during nets this morning. The more we talked, the more it became clear that many of the players asked about their availability had received a call from Mickey Stewart. I still had not.

I decided that I would take the bull by the horns and phooe him. I got through to his secretary, but he was unavailable.

At about half past four the phone rang and it was Mickey Stewart. I started by asking him what I had done wrong since May, when he had last got in touch.

"You've dooe absolutely nothing wrong, Aggy," he said. "And I can tell you that you were only a fig paper away from playing in the fifth Test at the Oval, and likewise against Sri Lanka at Lord's. You just missed out."

I said: "Well, if I just missed getting in a party of 12, how come a couple of weeks later I can't get in a squad of 16?"

He started to explain why I had not been picked, but he was talking about why Newport and Lawrence had been chosen.

I said: "Micky, it doesn't concern me at all why others have been picked. What I want to know is why it wasn't me. And what I really want to know is whether my omission was for reasons other than cricket."

"I can assure you, Aggy, that it was purely on cricketing grounds." I mentioned the history between myself and Fred Titmus, but I felt that Fred did oot rate me at the Oval when he was coach, and that he had oot changed his mind.

"That's oot true, Aggy. In fact, Fred was the first to raise your name at the meeting on Tuesday."

"So you're telling me that the reasons I was oot picked to go on the tour were purely on cricketing grounds and nothing else?"

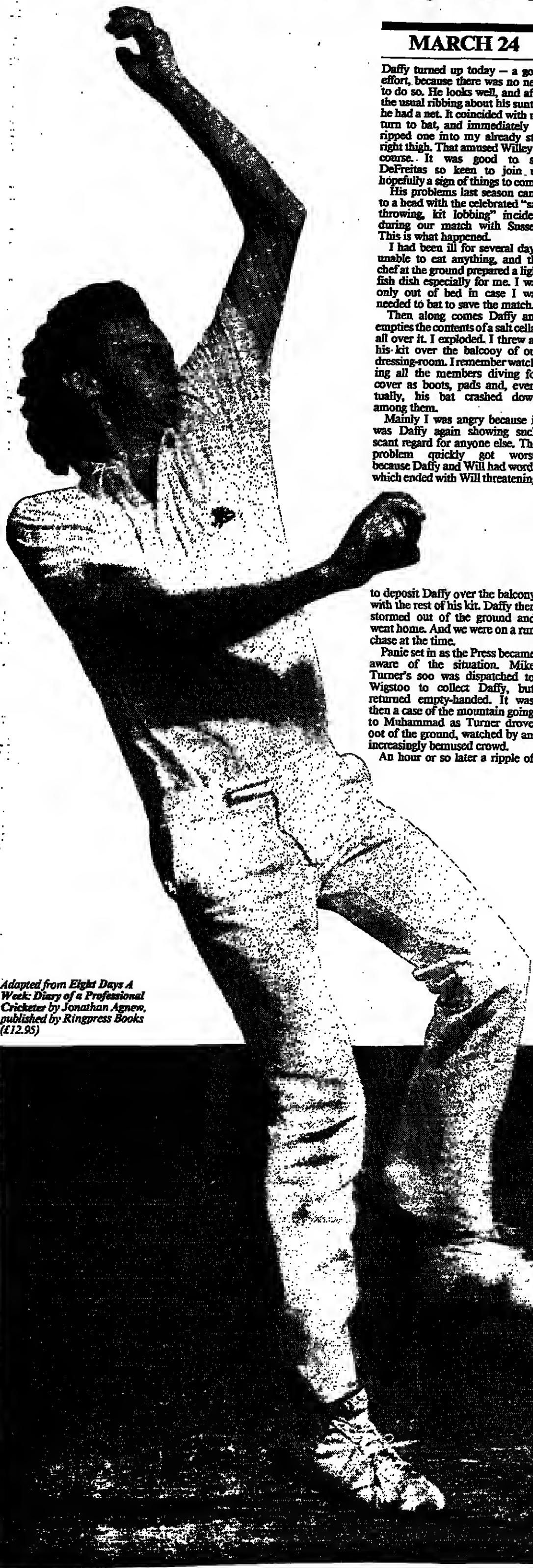
"Yes. No ooe can take away what you have achieved over the last couple of years. It is a great effort, but you have just missed out."

"Well, if that is the case," I said, "I can accept it. You and the selectors have made your choice, and it is your job to do that. I'm bloody upset at missing out, especially after being told that all selections were being made on form. What I can tell you, Micky, is that I'll be back again next year with another hundred wickets, and then you'll have to pick me."

And that is where we left it.



Stewart: telephone discussion



Adapted from *Eight Days A Week: Diary of a Professional Cricketer* by Jonathan Agnew, published by Ringpress Books (£12.95)



# Racing's argument for more money

1: The inability of the Bookmakers' Committee to reach agreement with the Levy Board on a scheme for the 28th Levy provides an opportunity for the racing industry to state its case for the proper funding of horseracing in Great Britain. We ask the Home Secretary to determine a Levy Scheme which provides the equivalent of 1.25 per cent of leviable betting turnover.

2: Racing is not only a major spectator sport but also a substantial provider of entertainment to both the betting shop and stay-at-home punter. It is primarily these two markets, together with other peripheral commercial activities, which represent the sources of finance, directly or indirectly, for the business of running the racing industry. For racing to flourish in a competitive leisure market, our product requires investment and must continue to enjoy the confidence of both the spectator and the punter through the work of the security and technical services.

3: Competitive racing and attractive facilities must be provided for the spectator, but he is already required to pay high admission fees which compare unfavourably with other spectator sports and with horseracing overseas, as the following figures clearly indicate:



## RACING AND THE BOOKMAKERS

provide the betting system, viz the bookmakers and the Tote. In practice income is raised mainly via the Levy Board from the levy on off-course betting, from the varied activities of the Tote and from contracts for the provision of live sound and pictures of racing to the betting market.

5: In considering what is the correct price for the product on which the betting industry bases its business, we must pay close attention to international comparisons. Racing is becoming increasingly international and Great Britain must compete with other major racing nations to retain its position as a leading creator of top-class racing and producer of prestige bloodstock.

6: Table B gives figures for percentage return to racing from betting turnover in those countries which are generally linked to Great Britain, by virtue of international competition in both races and the breeding sector of the industry, and what this return means in actual income.

The Home Secretary has been asked to arbitrate in the dispute between the Levy Board and the Bookmakers' Committee on the Levy rate for 1989-90. This week, *The Times* has examined the

turmoil in the funding of the sport. Today, we publish the text of the racing industry's submission to him, compiled jointly by the Jockey Club and the Horseracing Advisory Council

source that racing must look for a better price for its product.

13: The industry has taken a number of steps in recent years to improve the racing product for the off-course betting market with a consequent increase in bookmakers' betting turnover. These steps have included:

- (a) The programming of a minimum number of early afternoon fixtures, being at least:
  - (i) two on Mondays to Thursdays;
  - (ii) three on Fridays;
  - (iii) four on Saturdays;
- (b) Staggered start times for race meetings to provide an even flow of betting opportunities;
- (c) Promotion of a seventh race scheme;
- (d) Support for the introduction of television in betting shops;
- (e) Promotion of the concept of all-weather track racing to reduce the effects of abandonment in the winter.

14: The bookmakers' response to the help it has received from racing in the improvements and development of the product on which their businesses are built, is now to try to reduce the racing share of betting turnover. The racing industry was very disappointed with the final offer from the Bookmakers' Committee of an estimated yield of £31.7 million for the 28th Scheme, an effective 7 per cent cut in the rates of Levy applying in the current (27th) scheme.

15: The racing industry welcomes the stated intention of the

Bookmakers' Committee and of the Levy Board to eliminate the loss of Levy income resulting from disaggregation of group turnover among some bookmaking companies, a levy avoidance practice which has been allowed to go on for too long. The industry expects to benefit from the closing of this loophole by a change to a per shop assessment, as well as from increases in off-course turnover on horseracing which racing has done so much to stimulate.

16: We are confident that the betting product now available to bookmakers is much improved and merits an increase in the price to 1.25 per cent of leviable turnover in 1989-90. We are aware that a higher rate of Levy could cause bookmakers to contemplate an increase in the level of deductions from the punter. However, we see no obvious reason why the increase we seek should not be funded from a combination of the present level of deductions and use of those other mechanisms which the betting industry employs to secure its trading margins.

17: We have shown earlier in this paper that, by comparison with our overseas competitors, racing in Great Britain is poorly funded. As a result, amongst many other deficiencies, wages are low, the facilities available on racecourses are moderate and prize-money is poor. There are pressing requirements for new finance which simply cannot be put aside. A full account of the most urgent

priorities is given in part II of this submission. The estimated cost in 1989-90 is shown in Table D and would be recurrent.

### TABLE D

Prize-money	£m
Facilities on racecourses	10.0
Safety and welfare	4.5
Forensic science	2.0
Veterinary diagnosis	0.5
Racing programme	1.5
TOTAL	19.0

18: This figure of £19 million would be additional to the original Levy Board planning forecast for 1989-90, on which outline expenditure was based in January 1988. This extra funding would produce a total of £48.3 million, or 1.25 per cent of estimated leviable turnover in 1989-90.

19: To sum up, racing is underfunded and has set itself a target income, equivalent to 4 per cent of leviable betting turnover, through the development of a variety of sources to include the Levy, the Tote, broadcast rights and other market arrangements established between the betting and horseracing industries. However, for the short to medium term, as stated earlier in this submission, the industry will remain heavily dependent on its viability on the income from the Levy Board. For the time being it is from this source that racing must look for a better price for its product.

### TABLE A

Members	Tattersalls
GB	£5
Ireland	£5
France	£5
Italy	£5
Japan	£5

### OTHER SPORTS

Greyhound	£3.00
Cricket (Sunday)	£4.50
Athletics	£3.00
Football (first division)	£4.00

### TABLE B

Return %	Income £m
Australia	3.5
Canada	15.0
France	1.0
USA	0.88
Japan	4.2

### TABLE C

£m	£m
Betting Levy	31.2
Tote Contribution	0.86
Levy	0.46
Sponsorship	0.45
Racecourses	4.1
SIS income	3.0
Commentary Fund	1.8
Telephonic services	1.8
Pitch fees/admission	1.8
From NARBSL	0.5
Bookmaker sponsors	0.5
TOTAL	43.4

7: It is impossible to put a figure on the return in the United States, because racing takes place under different conditions on a State basis. However, judging by the prize-money on offer, the racecourses, who control the betting outlets, take a considerable percentage from the betting turnover they generate. The position in Ireland is also difficult to equate with Great Britain because the Irish racing industry, which includes Northern Ireland as well as the Republic, is limited to a 4.5 per cent return on on-course pool wagering. The Irish also enjoy considerable tax advantages compared with thoroughbred rac-

This total of £43.4 million would represent 1.08 per cent of estimated turnover on horseracing in 1988-89. Tote and bookmaker sponsorship can in part be regarded as a commercial marketing decision rather than a straight consequence of the generation of betting turnover.

10: In assessing how our target of 4 per cent is to be achieved, we are looking in the longer term to a significant increase in the price obtained for daily satellite pictures of live racing, both through nego-

proposed distribution of prize-money. "The Jockey Club believes in rewarding horses with ability, and we feel it would be wrong to downgrade those races for better class runners."

"The biggest contributors to racing are the owners, who put in some £120 million a year. They cannot be taken for granted and it is not a case of crying wolf. During the economic recession in the Seventies the numbers of owners fell, and if an owner feels that a racehorse is too expensive a luxury then he will pull out."

But when the talking is done, how hopeful are the submission's architects of a favourable response? "We feel we have a strong submission worthy of 1.25 per cent," Jackson said, "but in my view one per cent would be a good result."

"I wouldn't be drawn on a final figure," Foster added, "but if past precedent is anything to go by we would very likely get all of what we are asking for."

The main priorities, as described in the submission, include:

## Vital first steps to a healthy future

By George Rae

The second part of the submission, which the Jockey Club admits owes more to the Horseracing Advisory Council, identifies the priorities for additional Levy expenditure.

Stanley Jackson, the chief executive of HAC, outlined the thinking behind the proposals: "Over most of the last 10 years the bottom end of the scale has been almost starved of funds, while the upper levels have kept pace so we could remain internationally competitive."

"The prize-money argument cannot be overstated because it is central to the industry, and without the injection of greater funds its entire framework could be in jeopardy. In just two of many examples, the levels of wages and the health of the bloodstock industry are significantly affected by prize-money levels. We cannot afford to dilute the industry by allowing the prize-money to become too small."

Christopher Foster, on behalf of the Jockey Club, largely echoed Jackson's sentiments, although he did not entirely concur with the

proposed distribution of prize-money. "The Jockey Club believes in rewarding horses with ability, and we feel it would be wrong to downgrade those races for better class runners."

"The biggest contributors to racing are the owners, who put in some £120 million a year. They cannot be taken for granted and it is not a case of crying wolf. During the economic recession in the Seventies the numbers of owners fell, and if an owner feels that a racehorse is too expensive a luxury then he will pull out."

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The main priorities, as described in the submission, include:

Prize-money should benefit the lower tiers of racing. This year almost 10 per cent of the Flat race programme was advertised at £1,000 or less and over 33 per cent of the National Hunt programme.

Owners must have realistic prospects of recovering training fees. The long-term aim is for owners to recover training fees by winning any three races, whereas today they must win six or seven run-of-the-mill events.

Prize-money is not solely concern owners. It affects trainers' fees, and in turn the wages paid to stable staff. Failure to address the problem will drive experienced staff out of the industry.

Facilities and safety measures on racecourses, for both spectator and participant, must be improved. Suggestions for projects for 1988-89 totalled £11.5 million against £6.9 million set aside for that purpose by the Levy Board.

Increasing demands for forensic investigation, to protect racing's integrity, and veterinary research, imperative to a healthy horse population, must be met.

## Jack Waterman tracks down five National Hunt favourites of yesteryear, now enjoying well-earned retirement

# Jumping's senior citizens still in active service

National Hunt racing thrives on heroes. The latest to blaze like a comet across the scene is Desert Orchid. He has captured the public's imagination and his exploits are sure to be talked about for years to come.

But what of that band of heroes which Desert Orchid has joined? The heroes of yesterday? Faded from sight though not from memory, there are many household names of the past, still very much alive, who are leading happy lives as jumping's senior citizens in retirement.

Here is a (by no means comprehensive) selection of them, with ages given in anticipation of January 1, when they will all be a year older:

First, the most recently retired, Peaty Sandy, who is also, even rising 15, the youngest of the quintet.

Compared with Cregmore Boy back in the early sixties, who was still running at 22, or even Sony Sandy, who was winning steeplechases at 18, Peaty Sandy is but a strapping.

Nonetheless, after 11 success-

ful seasons, the Christmas cards and gift-wrapped boxes of apples now arriving for him at his home, on the farm in Innercliffe, Peablenesshire, are witness enough to his continuing popularity.

His owner, Miss Helen Hamilton, who trained him, gives a glowing report on Peaty Sandy's health and well-being. He has run this year at Ayr, when he fell for the first and only time in his career, finishing lame and being retired thereafter. "But," says Miss Hamilton, "it's anything but a sedate retirement."

What used to be a part-time task for him, is now a regular occupation: rounding up the sheep. In addition, he hunts most Saturdays with the Lauderdale, and says Miss Hamilton: "He was at Mussburgh racecourse last month (for a book launch) and as soon as he got on the course he immediately off at a rate of knots."

Next youngest, at nearly 16, is the Queen Mother's great old steeplechaser, Special Cargo.

And so to another extravert. Tingle Creek, coming up to 12, was also a Sandown star, beloved by the crowds for the breathtaking boldness of his

he was an absolute maniac."

Sent hurdling, Tingle Creek did nothing outstanding, but when first schooled over fences on the Links by Stan Mellor, it was a different matter. "In his first class, at Newbury, he was a fence in front and nothing else could get to him," Thomson Jones recalls. "We knew then we

really had something."

Today, he is ridden out daily on the Newmarket gallops by Don Caution, and looked after by a senior lad, Harry Buckle, who won't let anyone else near him."

And every year, as he did a fortnight ago, he goes to Sandown and proudly leads the

parade for the race named after him.

A greatly contrasting kind of retirement is enjoyed by Sea Pigeon, now just short of 19.

Owned by the Edinburgh wine and spirits merchant, Pat Muldoon, Sea Pigeon still leads a full life, with much of it devoted to good works.

Red Rum remains the epitome of National Hunt and Aintree valour and exhilarating achievement.

Quartered at the Eppingham Stud near Malton, he is a well-known personality in that Yorkshire training centre, and says the owner's son, Steve, whose yard is there, he has never looked better.

Muldoon senior said: "He does a tremendous amount of charity work, all for nothing. All that has to be paid for is his transport."

He's recently been raising funds for disabled children in Edinburgh. He was also at Jojo's open charity day with Night Nurse and Aldanti, and there was a queue a mile long of people being photographed with him at £10 a time.

Finally, the biggest idol of recent years, Red Rum, whose 24th birthday will soon be here, whose bounce and vitality remain undiminished, and who still carries his keep as a public celebrity.

His trainer, Ginger McCain, reports: "He was in London again recently opening a betting shop, and he's tremendously well. He had a medical in the summer, and though he still has to take his daily tablet, he's really quite amazing, particularly his teeth."

"I led him out the other day and the idiot was nearly running somersaults. Silly old fool. He could have done himself an injury."

Which serves only to emphasize the affection and regard for Red Rum as a centre-piece still, after 17 years, of the trainer's life.

Red Rum remains the epitome of National Hunt and Aintree valour and exhilarating achievement.

## What they achieved

**PEATY SANDY:** Only Scottish-trained winner of the Welsh National (1981). Won Ladbroke Trophy three times. Record 10 victories at Newcastle where a race is named in his honour, and six wins at Ayr. Ran 74, won 40, placed 20. Prize-money, £78,756.

**SPECIAL CARGO:** Won Whitbread Gold Cup (1984); twice Grand Military Gold Cup, 1981 and 1982, placed 10. Prize-money, £33,140.

**TINGLE CREEK:** Won Tingle Creek Handicap Chase; Hobson Export Lager Chase 1982, won 24, placed 37. Prize-money, £114,371.

three times. Ran 50, won 22, placed 18. Prize-money, £32,273.

**SEA PIGEON:** Winner of Champion Hurdle, Scottish Champion Hurdle and Fighting Fifth Hurdle all twice; also Welsh Champion Hurdle. Ran 40, won 21, placed 10. Prize-money, £130,285. Peaty Won Chester Cup twice and Ebor Handicap. Ran 43, won 16, placed 12. Prize-money, £103,865.

**RED RUM:** Only horse to win Grand National three times (placed twice as well); also won Scottish Grand Lager Chase 1982, won 24, placed 37. Prize-money, £114,371.

Today, Special Cargo is turned out in the paddocks, but, according to Cath Watly, who is "wonderfully well". Not only that, he has lost none of his challenge, and happily reigns as a boss figure among the store horses around him.

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## Eileen's mushy peas pierce the gloom

A series of weekly reports on Britain's racecourses  
No 16: NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham racecourse presents as gloomy an aspect as a disused colliery, while lacking the atmosphere.

Almost all the facilities belong to the era of black-and-white television. The exceptions are the new Tote credit building and the Meccano-esque grandstand roof, which has everything except flashing lights.

The original roof burnt down two years ago after two train boys, hoping to spend the night there, lit a fire which burnt more severely than they intended. The replacement is so brightly coloured and so in contrast with what is left of the original stand that one's first reaction is to burst out laughing.

The racecourse itself blends well with the scenery. Both seem almost deliberately featureless. A seasonal ranks as an event.

The course is completely flat and presents no problems for jockeys, with whom it is not unpopular. Pat Eddery and Steve Caughan are regular visitors in the summer and Nottingham was the scene of Lester Piggott's last ride in Britain in 1985.

The Members' and Tattersalls' enclosures have been

## THE GOOD RACECOURSE GUIDE

merged into one. Hence there are two sets of everything, including lavatories. These are well-lit but somewhat aquatic by mid-afternoon. Racegoers in this part of the Midlands need to practice their aim.

A happy legacy of our two friendly pyromaniacs is a comfortable new bar at the top of the grandstand, from where you can watch the racing either on closed-circuit television or through the windows.

Elsewhere, refreshment facilities are more basic. Most of the fittings seem to coincide with early episodes of Coronation Street. The wares include locally-brewed Italia Pale Ale at 75p a bottle (refreshing, but a little gassy) and fresh scones (45p). Service is quick in the winter but can be slow in the summer when the crowds are four or five times bigger.

The food in the restaurant is disappointing. The caterers,

Drewetts, who do a good job at Towcester and Warwick, would go out of business tomorrow if all their food was as unsatisfactory as that served on December 3.

A plate of passable roast lamb was accompanied by mashed potato (watery, badly warmed), green beans (cooked to death, cold) and leeks (both raw and cold). The waitresses, who are tireless and friendly, were visibly embarrassed at having to serve such disastrous grub. The price of £5.50 was tantamount to being nudged.

Though the racing is generally uninspiring, there is always a chance of seeing one good

horse. The top Newmarket park costs £12, including admission for four occupants.

**DRESS REQUIREMENTS:** None.

**HOSPITALITY:** Two boxes at the top of the main stand holding 50 and 30 guests. A menu can be arranged for parties of 100-plus.

**INQUIRIES:** David Hanson, clerk of the course and manager, 2 Lower Mounts, Northampton NN1 3DE. Tel: (053) 5207.

**BIG-RACE DATES:** City Trial Hurdle, Nottinghamshire Novices' Chase, February 18; Free Home Ales Gold Trophy, July 8; Nottingham Stewards' Cup, August 6.

winner of the seller, Aram Lily, for 13,000 guineas at the subsequent auction (bought in), thereby earning the racecourse the best part of £7,000. Hanson is helpful once you get to know him but can be abrupt with strangers.

It seems almost facetious to talk of Nottingham's "status", but the track is short-listed to become one of the first tracks in Britain to hold all-weather racing. A case of the mundane embracing the mundane.

But in all this drabness, there is one beacon of excellence: the mushy peas sold at 30p per portion out of the back of a mobile van. Connoisseurs over the years have exaggerated the side-effects of this classic dish, which has a good flavour and is exceptionally warming in the winter.

They are served with a smile by the delightful Eileen, who, incidentally, reported that she sold a ton of peas over three days at Ilkerton Fair this year.

**Rating**

One jockey's cap denotes Awful; two, bearable; three, Average; four, Very good; five, Excellent.

Martin Trew of Racing Post

## Hobbs making the most of unexpected opportunities

By Paul Wheeler

The old adage that "one man's meat is another man's poison" was perfectly illustrated last week. On Thursday at Huntingdon novice chaser Staghound lost an argument with a 4ft 6in birch fence leaving jockey Richard Rowe nursing a broken ankle.

This gave Peter Hobbs, one of Rowe's underdogs at Josh Clifford's Findon yard, a chance to stand in the limelight a chance he took with some aplomb by riding four winners at Cheltenham on Saturday.

Green Willow, Vodkintini, Abbreviation and Lyphemo - all trained by Clifford - obliged at accumulative odds of 297-1.

The day did not start well when Green Willow dropped Hobbs before the first race. As he recalls: "I'd had a fall at Devon the day before, and I wasn't feeling great at the time - it was tough and go whatever I rode or not. But it all worked out right in the end."

Hobbs views his opportunity with the philosophy which seems to run through the jockey's breed. "Obviously it's not the best way to do it, but it's part and parcel of the game. You take the chances when they come because they may not come again," he said.

Hobbs has ridden 125 win-



ter Kempton. He's a bit of a character.

Anyone who backed this enigmatic bay when he refused to race for Richard Rowe at Sandown a fortnight ago would view that as the understatement of this or any other year. But Hobbs has no complaints, having won two races on the same-year-old already this season. "He can be a handful sometimes, but I've caught him right on the few times I've ridden him."

Hobbs can also look to some good chances from another Findon yard, the King of the Hill. "Ballyhane is running in novice hurdles at the moment but he's a lovely chaser in the making. And there's also a couple of bumper horses called Border Archer and Class Escape."

One historical aspect of Hobbs' Cheltenham spree; it was the first occasion a jockey had ridden a four-timer at Prestbury Park for more than 40 years.

The feat had not been achieved since the riding days of Fred Rimell, Dan Moore and Frenchie Nicholson, who did it twice.

On finding out the illustrious company he now keeps, Hobbs commented with a note of respect: "I've heard of a lot of many winners as they did."

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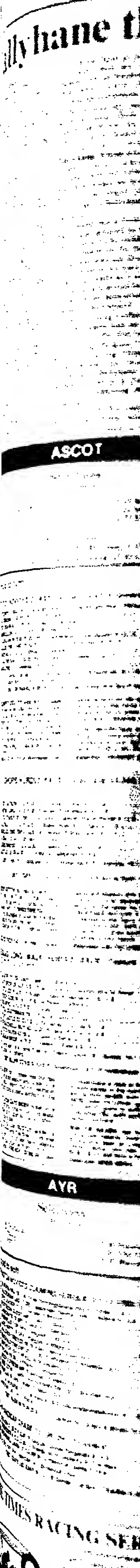
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Childhood of the Champions: Martin Brundle

A Norfolk boy's formula

Are champions in sport born or made? Mick Cleary discovers how the world No. 1 sports car driver started out at the age of eight in a battered old Austin A35

It was a deliberate collision. There could be no doubt about it, Martin Brundle was on his lap of honour when a screech of tyres alerted him to the car hurtling towards him.

Luckily it was not quite the end of Brundle himself. The crash itself though was only half the problem. Brundle started to remonstrate with the other driver. Suddenly out came a crowd and young Brundle, then only 15, decided that he would rather still be around to sit his O-levels that summer.

Fourteen years later when people talk about heated arguments between rival drivers, Brundle just smiles. He knows what an argument really is. Not that he has had that many of late in becoming the world sports car champion, a title he clinched recently in Japan.

Brundle grew up amidst oily rags and exhaust fumes. The streamlined Jaguar he drove in the world championship was a far cry from the clapped out, ad hoc cars he used to put together himself when he first started competitive racing as a 12-year-old.

From the age of eight Brundle, with his younger brother Robin, aged five, would pester some unsuspecting adult into taking them down to a nearby field in a battered old Austin A35. Eyes peeping over the steering wheel, Brundle would tear across the rutted terrain, skidding and sliding to his heart's content.



Seat of power: No need to look for adults to terrorize this time - Brundle taking lessons for his helicopter pilot's licence

was quite a large turnover of volunteers. We could only count them into operating the pedals for us a couple of times before we terrorized the life out of them. Looking back I suppose it was all a bit dangerous. But of course as kids you never bother to rationalize your feelings. It was all just fantastic excitement."

By the age of 12 Brundle was ready for the real thing. On Sunday mornings his father, John, would drop him off at local dirt-track meetings on his way to work at the garage. "He would pick me up on his way home, usually in one piece which is more than you could say for the car."

"The car" was in fact no more than an old banger procured from the scrap heap to the family garage. Brundle would take it to pieces, removing everything breakable, refitting the radiator at the back to protect it from collisions, add four knobby tyres and then cajole the mechanic into tweaking up the engine. "He used to do such a good job and I was often accused of cheating. The unofficial rules were that 'bog-standard' cars were only there to be used."

in the Zephyr. 6 put paid to Brundle's all-conquering Anglia Estate. Hot-rod racing was the next step, an altogether fiercer arena.

Money has always been a potential stumbling block for any talented aspiring driver. Without financial back-up the fastest gear change in the world will only get you so far.

Brundle learned the value of money from a very early age. "My father used to be a smallholding farmer. As the family had been for generations. One year he lost his entire crop of strawberries to some bent dealer in London who made off with everything. We were broke. So dad set up the garage. As I grew up I saw what cash flow really meant - either you had some money in your back pocket or you were finished."

"That experience was probably as invaluable to me as all the basic driving skills I picked up hammering around the fields of Norfolk. To get a Formula One drive you have just got to push yourself, market yourself, in short - sell yourself."

Brundle, who has joined the Brabham Formula One team for next season, is now a rich man. Quite apart from his successes on the track the family garage has also flourished. Yet, for all his money, Brundle chooses to stay in Norfolk, only a few miles from where he was born. "I'm very much the country boy at heart. My childhood was very happy and secure, and I like this type of people - very honest but also quite private."

"I'm exactly the same. My rather reticent character has often been misconstrued: arrogant or lacking in confidence or even simple, despite the fact I've got 12 O-levels and a distinction in business studies. When I won the world championship in Fuji people expected me to jump up and down in wild ecstasy, spraying champagne everywhere. But people from Norfolk are just not like that."



Brundle looking to the future

ATHLETICS Tunstall's chance to defeat Ngugi

By Pat Butcher

Steve Tunstall is the most exciting thing to happen in British men's cross-country in years. On his performance in last week's Lancashire championships, alone, it will require a dramatic improvement in John Ngugi's recent form for the Olympic 5,000 metres gold medal winner and thrice world cross-country champion to get anywhere near Tunstall in the Miller-Lee Cup on the grounds of Cardiff Castle today.

Peter Tootell is no stick in the mud, and Lancashire are the strongest cross-country county in England. But Tunstall, recently returned from five years service with the French Foreign Legion, beat Tootell by the extraordinary margin of 82 seconds at Skelmersdale last Saturday.

Ngugi, in contrast, has been taking it easy since his own runaway win in Seoul. The Kenyan has finished well down the field in Tim Hutchings's two victorious races in France in the last fortnight. Hutchings won both by 20 seconds and looks to be running as well as he has done in the last five years, which includes a second place in the world championship in 1984.

All of which indicates a duel between Hutchings and Tunstall will be a first Britain, providing the more likely Kenyan challenge, and Dave Clarke and Dave Lewis ensuring an England team victory.

Any chances of a British team consisting that placing in the world championship in Stavanger next March would be immeasurably improved by the inclusion of Tunstall. But that does not seem so likely now.

Having run for France in this year's world championship, finishing fourth, but behind Roger Black, the first Briton, Tunstall should, in theory, be unavailable to represent Britain for three years.

However, the French agreed to a nominal one year, which means that Tunstall, always supposed to be under selection, would have to miss this season's world championship, since Stavanger comes one week earlier than the race in New Zealand last March.

It was suggested a month ago that the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) would be favourably disposed towards a British plea to waive the few days which separate the world championship from Tunstall's reinstatement. But it seems that the IAAF now feels that Britain should demand, in case of refusal, from other leading cross-country nations.

HOCKEY Dundee invitation event will benefit Old Loughtonians

By Sydney Friskin

Slough and Old Loughtonians will be at Dundee today and tomorrow for the invitation indoor club tournament, organized by Menzies Hill as a prelude to more intense competition to follow next month. Both English clubs are treating the event as a training exercise and it will be particularly useful for Old Loughtonians, who have reached the last 32 of the Rayns Bank national indoor championship.

Because of the England indoor training weekend at Aldenham School, Old Loughtonians are without their Scottish players, Nick Thompson and Halls, all of whom expect to be selected for coming international events.

Their squad for Dundee includes Camille Ashton, Martin, and Sean, the goalkeeper, who represent the core of experience. The newcomers are Mooney, Sutherland and Philpot, an England schoolboy.

The Slough side, which is sponsored for indoor hockey by Boxrent, looks even less like challenging. Apart from Ken and Steve Partington and the goalkeeper, Louison, the others have yet to make an impression at the indoor game, the names of Felton, Goswell, Auld, Press, Shahid, and Parvez being unfamiliar to the Scots.

The Scottish clubs, on the other hand, are assembling in full force, no doubt with an eye on the home countries tournament at Glasgow on January 21 and 22.

Menzies Hill, the host side and holders of the Glenfiddich international title, have at least three Scottish internationals, Christie, Cox and Cuthill, Wilton, Coxie, Tom Hay, Scouler, Plevin, Knapp, and Kay are playing for Murray International Metals and the key to success could rest with either of these two clubs.

Into the fray come Welsh Dragons, who are also using the event as a training exercise. Their side includes Gowman, a prolific scorer and the Colclough brothers, Andy and Tony.

From all appearances this could be an eventful tournament with Welsh Dragons, Slough, Plexus-Mercian and Murray International Metals making up group A and Menzies Hill, Western Independent, Khalisa and Old Loughtonians forming group B.

The winners and runners-up of each group will, as usual, qualify for the semi-finals.

The particularly short indoor season makes the overlapping of events unavoidable. The Glenfiddich tournament, in which St Albans are taking part, clashes with the Roses tournament at Crystal Palace on January 7 and 8. So, too, does the Lada Inter-cities tournament at Birmingham with the junior European championship at Orense, near Bilbao, from January 27 to 29. Here England are expecting to win a medal.

County players help Exeter push claims

By Joyce Whitehead

With no representative matches of note or international games adding to the fixture list, leading clubs will enjoy the rare experience today of having their best players available when they take the field.

If form is maintained, Exeter and East Gloucester will go in at the half-way stage of the Sun Life West Club League's first season, leading the field.

Exeter, whose home ground is now the new stadium pitch at Ottery St Mary, have improved greatly under the coaching of Jenny Tippin, the former England captain. Eileen Mander (formerly Derbyshire and Midlands) is scoring most of the goals along with Sue Cligg. With two new players and one from Cornwall, they are certainly a promising side.

Traditionally, East Gloucester

is better in defence than attack or proving elusive although seven of the side represent Gloucestershire. The others have come up from last year's Gloucestershire juniors.

Clifton and Swinton are supposed to be in form. Swinton have played Leominster, they may well be on the heels of East Gloucester and Exeter. Clifton do not play this week.

In the Midlands, two matches in the premier division will be played this weekend and both could add another contender to the top. Sutton Coldfield and Sherwood are on eight points each with Leicester Pickwick and Tamworth on four. Sherwood play Leicester in Nottingham and Tamworth are at home to Pickwick. If their strongest side is available, Leicester could extend Sherwood.

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Law Report December 17 1988

Inequality justified only during crisis

Beveniste v University of Southampton

Before Lord Donaldson of Lynton, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Mustill and Lord Justice Butler-Sloss (Judgment November 23) Financial contract was a "material difference" justifying a variation between a woman's contract and that of her male comparators for the purposes of section 1(3) of the Equal Pay Act 1970, as amended, only while the contract persisted.

When it ended, the difference evaporated and the employers were no longer justified in paying her a lower salary than her male comparators.

The Court of Appeal so held in breach of the equality provisions of section 1 of the Equal Pay Act 1970, as substituted by the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and in any event were entitled to rely on section 1(3) as substituted by the Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations (SI 1983 No 1794).

Section 1 of the 1970 Act, as amended, provides: "(1) If the terms of a contract under which a woman is employed... do not include an equality clause then she shall be deemed to include one."

"(2) An equality clause is a provision which relates to terms...

... of a contract had the effect that where a woman was employed in the same employment as a man in the same employment... and has the effect that - (a) where the woman is employed on like work with a man in the same employment - (i) if apart from the equality clause any term of the woman's contract is... less favourable to the woman than a term of a similar kind under which that man is employed, that term in the woman's contract shall be treated as if it were as not to be less favourable...

"(3) An equality clause shall not operate in relation to a variation between the woman's contract and the man's contract if the employer proves that the variation is due to a material factor which is not the difference of sex and that factor - (a) ... must be a material difference between the woman's case and the man's..."

Mr Ian Lee for the employer, Mr Alan Wilkie for the employees. LORD JUSTICE NEILL said that the case was not within section 1(2)(a) because no term in the employee's contract was less favourable than any term in the contract of her chosen male comparators and that even if the case did fall within the section, section 1(3) applied because there was a material difference in her case from the comparators.

The employee had asserted that since her male comparators were employed in like work and earned more, there was a term in her contract which was less favourable; and that although the existence of financial con-

straint could be a material difference on the authority of *Rayner v Greater Glasgow Health Board* (1987) AC 224 that difference had evaporated by the end of 1981 when the contract ended and that accordingly the employees could not rely on section 1(3).

The employers had urged that the 1970 Act had no application since the employee's complaint really related to her place on the scale, not to her salary, that they had a discretion where on the scale to put a lecturer, and that there being no age for wage norms, she had no contractual right to be put on the scale at any particular point.

His Lordship could not accept that submission in the present case. She accepted like work with her comparators and was paid less because she had been appointed to a year of financial restraint. On a correct analysis there was a term regarding her salary which was less favourable than her comparators.

His Lordship also rejected the employer's contention that they could rely on section 1(3). Because the restraint ended in 1981 the special factor in the purposes of section 1(3) also ended. It could not be right to pay her on a lower scale when the reason for doing so had disappeared. The financial constraint ended in 1981 and the material difference then evaporated.

The Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Butler-Sloss agreed.

Solicitors: Pattinson & Brewer; Heppell Winstanley & Pugh, Southampton.

Judicial review refused while appeal pending

Regina v Mid-Worcestershire Justices, Ex parte Hart

Before Lord Justice Parker and Mr Justice Henry (Judgment December 7) At the outset of the hearing of an application for judicial review of proceedings before justices, an applicant whose appeal to the crown court was then pending must immediately so inform the Divisional Court.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held, in dismissing an application by John Anthony Hart for judicial review of his conviction by the Droitwich Motorway Justices on July 6, 1988, on a charge of driving at a speed exceeding the permitted limit - he having also given notice of appeal to the crown court against that conviction.

Mr Richard Bromlow for the applicant; Mr Patrick McCall for the justices.

What had happened in this case was unusual and unsatisfactory in that the passenger in the police vehicle, where the device was installed, had not been trained in the use of it had been operated by the driver. That should never happen.

The driver's duty was to drive, not to operate switches at the exact moments when he might observe vehicles passing particular markers.

The only ground on which judicial review was here sought was that the justices had acted, after the conclusion of the case for the defence, to an application by the prosecution for leave to recall the passenger in the police vehicle to give further evidence in rebuttal.

The justices apparently considered it useful to have the confirmation afforded by that evidence, but it was suggested that they would have recalled that officer in the absence of that application.

There had in fact been differences, as to the distances involved, between the various witnesses but in this case such differences were insignificant because if the device was operated correctly, it would ac-

curately calculate the relevant distance.

In fact the passenger's further evidence had been of no material effect whatever nor, indeed, had there been an occasion when the prosecution had been justified in seeking to call further evidence in rebuttal of that called for the defence.

The application would, however, be refused for two reasons. First, because of the insignificance of that further evidence.

Second, because the court had, at a regrettably late stage, been informed that the applicant had lodged an appeal to the crown court against his conviction.

In *R v Barnes and Others, Ex parte Lord Vernon* (1979) 102 LT 860, 861 Lord Chief Justice Alverstone had expressed an identical regret, that when he had been moved to grant a rule against the respondent justices to show cause why *certiorari* should not issue, it had not been mentioned to him that the defendant was appealing to quarter sessions. He had commented that in a case where there was a limited time for appealing and the party had appealed, no *certiorari* would be

granted until the appeal had been disposed of because in one event the *certiorari* might be useless.

His Lordship did not propose to go into the question, whether an appeal to the crown court was an insuperable bar to any and every application for judicial review but in this particular case he had no doubt that judicial review should not be granted because the matter was obviously much more suitable for a rehearing in the crown court.

While it would not be right for the Divisional Court to make any observations about the merits, a number of points would, no doubt, be made on the applicant's behalf at such rehearing.

Mr Justice Henry agreed. Solicitors: Henriques, Griffiths & Co, Bristol; CPS, Droitwich.

Correction

In *R v Tower Hamlets LBC, Ex parte Camden LBC* (The Times December 12) Miss Lucy Trevellick appeared with Mr Ashley Underwood for Tower Hamlets. In *Capps v Miller* (The Times December 12) the date of judgment was November 30.



PROPERTY

# Family castle, not for sale

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRAHAM WOOD

**If aristocrats cannot keep up their homes, Nicholas Ridley says, they should sell them**

**to those who can. In Oxfordshire, Lord and Lady Saye and Sele beg to differ. Sally Brompton reports**

The 21st Baron Saye and Sele, Nathaniel Thomas Allen Fiennes, carried his mid-morning mug of Bovril up from the kitchen himself, gulping it down in front of the blazing log fire, the very picture of an Englishman whose castle is his home.

His ancestors' servants would doubtless have brought in the bouillon on a silver tray, but the landed gentry have had to come to terms with the 20th century. The *anciens pauvres*, as Nicholas Ridley calls them, may have been born into marbled halls but their lifestyle now is more than often three-up, two-down.

Certainly, Nathaniel Fiennes and his wife, Mariette, live modestly behind the moated stone buttresses of Broughton Castle in Oxfordshire, home to Lord Saye and Sele's family for more than 600 years. "We don't have butlers or Rolls Royces or go to the West Indies or buy expensive jewellery," says the 68-year-old peer, who drives himself around in an Austin Montego. "And we always travel second-class when we go by train. I like to think we're the same as other people except for the fact that we live in a castle."

Lord Saye and Sele was predictably unimpressed by environment minister Ridley's suggestion that "impoverished aristocrats" should no longer receive government aid to maintain their "crumbling stately homes" but should sell them instead to the *nouveau riches*. "I felt a bit insulted at first," he admits. "I thought it was uncalled-for abuse and very much missing the point."

Ever since he took possession of the castle 20 years ago, following the death of his parents within 10 days of one another, he and his vivacious wife have invested their time, money and considerable enthusiasm in maintaining Broughton both as a family home and as a national heritage.

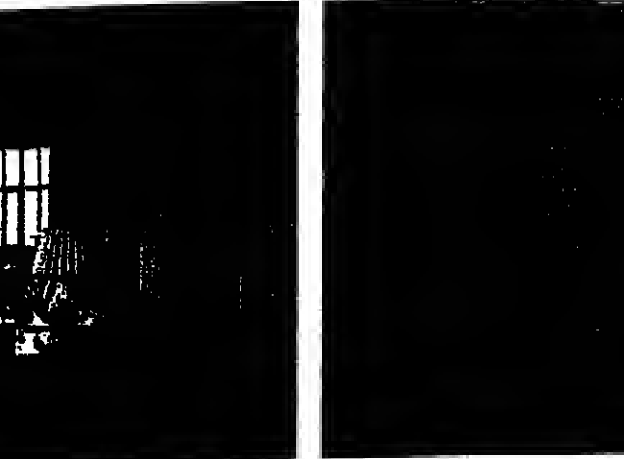
"It's a tremendous responsibility and quite a burden but equally it's an enormous privilege and we do get a great deal of enjoyment out of it," he says. "I'm a great believer in the work ethos. Just because you own a big house is not a good enough reason to stand around and do nothing." He often escorts tourists round the castle himself or takes their money at the gate, and is, occasionally, asked to point out "the Lord". "The fact that I look so insignificant helps." The previous day his wife had made instant coffee for a party of fine-art students.

He is in the middle of a 15-year £1.5 million restoration

Broughton's visitors: the 21st baron often takes them round



The medieval Great Hall, scene of charity concerts. Right, 18th-century Chinese hand-painted wallpaper in the King's Chamber



The Oak Room carpet at Broughton was paid for by a movie. Right, the Queen Anne Room with its 18th-century four-poster bed



Nicholas Ridley might not be the most welcome guest at Broughton Castle, near Banbury, Oxfordshire, home of Lord and Lady Saye and Sele: "The upkeep is a responsibility... and a privilege"

*The Slipper and the Rose, The Scarlet Pimpernel* and even, on one occasion, *The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show*. (The new carpet in the Oak Room was paid for by the American-made movie *Joseph Andrews*.)

The £60,000 a year which Lord Saye and Sele is spending on the structure comes from his 17,500 acres of farmland, part of which is tenanted and

the rest of which he farms in a partnership. His personal income from his chartered surveying business keeps him and his wife in the less-than-grand style to which they have become accustomed.

Their four children all live away from home and return at weekends. Richard, aged 29, is in a home for epileptics; Martin, 27, runs a small printing firm in London; his twin, Susannah, is an artist; William, 18, is teaching in Brazil while waiting to go up to Oxford. Martio will eventually inherit the ancestral home. "I would be very sad if the house didn't stay in the family," his father admits.

As best they can, and are using their money to preserve the place and at the same time open it up to the public.

"The heartbeat of an old house is the people who inhabit it and care for it and its traditions. I don't regard myself as the owner of Broughton but as the temporary custodian, and I think it's sad that a politician in Mr Ridley's position finds it necessary to

pour scorn on those of us who are striving against considerable odds to preserve this particular part of our heritage. "I accept that nobody owes us anything — least of all the Government — but if our historic houses are to be maintained for the future I believe that it will be done best and cheapest by the families who cherish them and can give them continuity."

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